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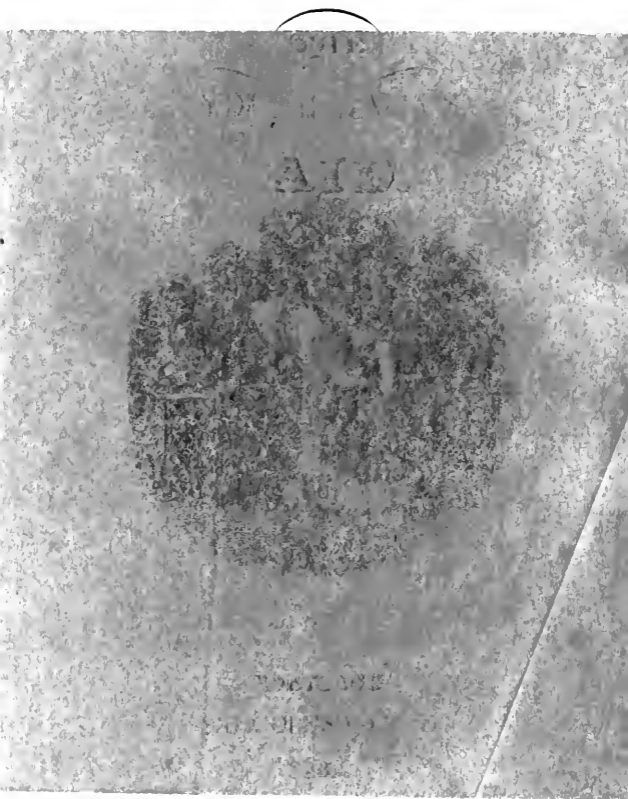
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THE
YOUNG LADY'S
AID.



Read, not to contradict and confute,—nor to believe
and take for granted,—nor to find talk and discourse,—
but to weigh and consider. *Bacon.*

PORTLAND
S. H. COLESWORTHY,

1839.

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THE
YOUNG LADY'S AID,
TO
USEFULNESS AND HAPPINESS.

BY JASON WHITMAN,
AUTHOR OF THE YOUNG MAN'S ASSISTANT.

SECOND EDITION,
IMPROVED AND ENLARGED.



PORTLAND:
S. H. COLESWORTHY.
1839.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1838,
BY S. H. COLESWORTHY,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Maine.

RUFUS TUKEY, PRINTER,
NO. 23, EXCHANGE STREET.

TO
THE YOUNG LADIES
OF
THE PARK-STREET PARISH,
PORTLAND, MAINE,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME,
ORIGINALLY PREPARED FOR THEIR GOOD,
AND IN THE FORM OF
LECTURES,
DELIVERED IN THEIR PRESENCE IS
AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED
BY THEIR
FRIEND AND PASTOR.

P R E F A C E .

I am aware, that it may seem to be the very height of presumption, to bring forward a work addressed to young ladies, after the excellent volumes of Mrs. Sigourney and Mrs. Farrar. But I have ever felt that the multiplication of books of this character is productive of good rather than of evil. My reasons are these. Every writer has his own way of stating things, his peculiar mode of address, his individual style of writing. Then, too, the tastes of readers differ widely. What is dull to one, may be interesting to another. There is hope, therefore, that if books are multiplied, and the subjects are presented in different modes and styles, a greater variety of tastes will be suited, and a greater number of readers will be interested. Then, too, it is often the case, that a book is read with interest, on account of the acquaintance, which the reader may have with the writer. Every one has his circle of friends and acquaintances, within which, what he may say will be eagerly read and particularly regarded. I would cherish the hope, therefore, that this little volume

may find readers, and may exert an influence among the friends and acquaintances of the writer, and with those whose tastes may be suited, by his particular mode of address, notwithstanding there may be other and better books of a similar character already before the public.

This volume was originally prepared, as has been already hinted, in the form of lectures.—The occasion of preparing them was simply this. In the regular discharge of my professional duties, I addressed a course of lectures to the young men of my parish. It was hinted by a respected female friend, that, a similar course, addressed to young ladies, would be acceptable and might be the means of some good. The suggestion was accepted and acted upon. The lectures were given on the afternoons of six successive Sabbaths. They were very fully attended, by young ladies from most of the religious societies in the city and were listened to with great apparent interest. It has been suggested to me that by publishing them they might be instrumental of more extended good.

In regard to the matter and the style of these letters, I simply say, that I have touched upon those topics, which have presented themselves most forcibly to my own mind, as the topics upon which counsel and advice were most needed, and that I have written straight on, just as thoughts,

examples and illustrations have occurred, laboring only to be understood and felt, and not thinking whether I should subject myself to censure or secure to myself praise.

I now commend this little book to the public, to whose good opinion I am not indifferent, and in whose approbation of my efforts I should rejoice. I commend it especially to that interesting and most important class of the community, to whom it is more particularly addressed—the young ladies—with the hope that it may be to them truly and in reality what it is nominally, an *aid to usefulness and happiness*. But above all would I commend this effort to our heavenly Father, with the prayer, that he would accept and bless whatever in it may be in accordance with his will, and forgive what in it may not meet with his approval.

JASON WHITMAN.



THE
YOUNG LADY'S AID.

LETTER I.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON THE
CONDITION OF FEMALES.

Introductory remarks—the condition of females in savage lands—in those semi-civilized—in Christian lands—reasons for instituting this comparison—Counsels and advice should be adapted to the condition in which women are to be placed; Christianity regards woman as an individual spiritual being before God—dependent upon and accountable to him—This the essential distinction and the essential relation—This thought will fill woman with self-respect—It will lead her to such courses of conduct and such pursuits of study as will render her worthy of the respect of others.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:—

The peculiar situations in which I have been placed in life, as a teacher, with young

ladies under my instruction, and, then, as a minister of the gospel, have afforded me opportunities for observing the peculiar dangers to which you are exposed; and have excited within me deep feelings of interest in your welfare. I have, for a long time wished to see you aiming more constantly at usefulness, in the highest and best sense of that term, as the direct road to happiness. And I have felt desirous of doing what little might be in my power, to aid you in your endeavors to become useful and happy. I have, therefore, determined to address you in a series of letters. I shall not speak as an admirer of female beauty and female charms, and fill my letters with fulsome flattery. The deep and heartfelt respect which I entertain for you, forbids it. Nor shall I speak to you, simply as a christian minister, in the measured stiffness of official dignity, authority or reserve. No my friends, I desire to lay aside every thing which may prevent my speaking to you with the same freedom, directness and particularity, with which I should address an own and much loved sister. And I wish you to regard the sugges-

tions, which I may offer, not merely as the cold dictates of official duty, but as the warmer promptings of fraternal affection. I would approach you as a brother—I would speak to you as to sisters. But, while I would lay aside my official character, I cannot forget my christian solitudes. While I would speak to you as a brother, I beg you to bear it in mind, that it is as a christian brother that I speak;—for, if christianity be regarded as the living and eternal truth of God, and be allowed to reach the heart, it will affect our feelings, most deeply and distinctly, in regard to those who are near and dear to us. Does the christian pray for the salvation of heathen nations? And does he not pray, with tenfold more earnestness for the salvation of those near and dear to him—of parents, brothers, sisters, wife, children? You will not, then, think it strange that, in speaking to you as a brother, I may suffer myself to be controlled by my christian solicitude for your spiritual good.

I have thus, my young friends, introduced myself to your acquaintance, and explained to you the feelings, desires and intentions, with

which I commenced this series of letters ; and now, I would ask you to pause and look at yourselves, to consider carefully the peculiarities of the situation in which you are placed, to inquire for the causes which have produced these peculiarities, and for the duties which spring from them. And you will be the better enabled to do this, if you will first inquire into the situation of females in other times and other lands. As you pursue this inquiry, you will find, that, in many nations, woman has been regarded as the slave or the play thing of man; you will find too, that in some nations, she is even now so regarded. Among savage nations, woman is in reality only a slave. She must bear burdens, and endure fatigues in obedience to her lord and master, the husband. The husband will pass his days in sport or idleness, while the wife is employed in hard and wearing labor. Among such nations, man seems to look upon woman as created for him, for his use and pleasure. Such is the condition of woman among savage nations.

There are other nations, more nearly civilized, where the condition of woman is differ-

ent, where she is suffered to live in comparative idleness, where she is gaily decked out and fondly caressed. But among these she is regarded as a mere toy or play thing. Like the child's doll, she may be carefully preserved and beautifully adorned, but still preserved and adorned, only as a doll, only as a gilded play thing, which may serve as a source of temporary pleasure. Such is the condition of woman in some lands? she lives, and adorns her person, and cultivates her charms that so she may be the more acceptable as a toy, or may the more readily excite the passions she must gratify. Then there are other lands, like our own, which are civilized and christianized, and what is the condition of woman in these? Here, she is regarded, not as the slave, not as the play thing, but as the equal and companion of man. Man looks to her, not merely for service, not solely for pleasure. He looks to her for sympathy and counsel. He does not command her as a superior but speaks to her as to an equal. Is the husband in indigent circumstances? He does, indeed, expect the wife to struggle with him against the evils

of poverty. And he hopes to be himself animated to still more resolute exertions, by the cheerfulness and resolution with which she may struggle. Is the husband rich? He expects to find, in the wife, one who will counsel and advise, in regard to the best mode of employing the riches which God has bestowed; one, who will aid him in doing good according to the extent of his means. Is man placed on a bed of sickness? The attentions of none are so soothing as those of woman, those of a mother, a daughter, a sister, or a wife. At such times man looks to woman not merely as an equal, but as a superior. He is almost inclined to regard her as an 'angel of mercy,' at least as a 'sister of charity,' and superior to himself in her capacity for charitable deeds.

But why, you may ask, is it necessary or important to bring these different conditions of woman into view by way of contrast? I answer, that counsel and advice, in order to be appropriate and useful, should be adapted to the condition of those to whom it is addressed. If woman is to be the slave of man, to perform labors and bear burdens at his command, then

she should prepare herself, while young, for her future labors by such a course of exercise and effort, as will produce physical development and bodily strength. Under such circumstances and with such prospects the counsels and advice given should have principal reference to this point. So, too, if woman is to be the mere toy and play thing of man, living only to afford him pleasure, or to gratify his passions, then should she qualify herself for this condition by seeking in early years an acquaintance with those arts and personal embellishments, which are calculated to make her a more accomplished and acceptable toy. Under such circumstances and with such prospects, the counsels given should have reference to this kind of preparation. But if woman is to be the equal, the companion, the counsellor of man, then should her early education and training have reference to these peculiarities in her condition. And, where man is enlightened and refined, there must woman also be enlightened and refined, that she may be truly equal and capable of companionship. You will perceive, at once, that, in the latter

case, the education necessary will be more various, extensive and difficult, than in the former. In the former cases, man seeks the company of woman only at particular times, when he wishes for her labor and service, or when he would amuse himself with her as a toy. But, in the latter case, there is no state of mind, in which man does not seek the society of woman. Does he rejoice? He would share his joys with some beloved female. Does he weep? His tears are wiped away by the delicate hand of a mother, or a daughter, a sister or a wife. Is the husband in doubt, in perplexity, in distress? Does he not go to the wife of his bosom for advice, for counsel, for sympathy, for encouragement? Consequently, woman should be prepared to meet all these various calls. The mind, then, should be informed and the judgment matured, that she may be qualified to give counsel. The sympathies should be awakened, the feelings cultivated and the affections trained, that so she may enter into the feelings, draw forth the sympathies, and enlist the affections of those she would counsel; that so she may

come to man, not as a superior being to reprove or instruct merely, but as an equal, to share with him his various fortunes. And then, too, the energies should be aroused and developed, that so she may be herself enabled to bear up cheerfully and to cheer and encourage her companion under trial and difficulty. Such, I say, should be the early training of one, who is to be the companion and counsellor of educated and enlightened man. How various, how extensive, how difficult the task. I have alluded, then, to these differences in the condition of woman, in order that you may understand the reason and the object of my counsels. For it will be my endeavor to give such, as are calculated to prepare you for the peculiar circumstances of your future condition; such as are calculated to prepare you to be in reality and truly the companions and counsellors of man. I have alluded to these differences in the condition of woman for another reason; I wish you to understand the principle involved in this difference, to know, not merely that there is a difference, but why this difference exists; the causes which have produced it. And

on this point, I would observe, that, upon examination, you will find that there is a marked and striking difference between the condition of woman in christian and unchristian lands.

There may be, and there undoubtedly are, great differences in the condition of woman in lands not christian, and in some they may be more elevated than in others. So too there may be, and there undoubtedly is a great diversity in the condition of woman in different christian lands. In some they may be more degraded than in others. But these are only differences in modes and degrees; they are not differences in principle. Between christian lands and those not christian the difference is one of principle. And what is this difference of principle? It is this. In lands not christian woman is regarded only as an appendage of man, as created for his use and pleasure. The estimation in which she is held, and the condition in which she is placed, depend only upon the different opinions, which may prevail in regard to her appropriate sphere, either as a servant of labor or as a minister of pleasure. She is not regarded as

an independent individual creation, of intrinsic worth in herself; but simply as an appendage of man, living, laboring, studying the arts of pleasing with a view to the service, or to the gratification of man. Such is the peculiarity of the prevalent opinions in regard to woman in lands not christian. There may be slight differences in the mode in which she is treated. The savage may make woman but a substitute for a beast of burden. The Turk, with his seraglio, may regard her as a toy, valuable indeed, but still a toy. But the principle with both is the same. They both regard woman as the appendage of man. In christian lands the case is far different.—Christianity addresses woman as an individual, a spiritual being, possessing powers, and capacities, involved in responsibilities, capable of happiness; a being of real, intrinsic and eternal worth, in herself, and without dependence upon man. Christianity connects woman directly with the throne of God, and teaches that she is no more to be regarded as an appendage of man than man is to be regarded as an appendage of woman. Christianity does

indeed recognize the relations, in which woman is placed. It regards her as sustaining to man the relation of daughter, sister, wife and mother; and enforces, with sanctions the most solemn, the obligations and duties of these relations. But she places man and woman on an equality before God. If she says to wives 'submit yourselves to your own husbands,' she is only pointing out a duty, which springs from a peculiar relation. She does not say woman submit to man. She only says, having entered a peculiar relation in which it is necessary that there should be one and only one head, you must yield all proper submission to this head. This then is the principle, the peculiarity of the view, with which woman is regarded and addressed by christianity. She is addressed as an individual immortal spirit, looking not to man, but to God, as the being with whom she is directly connected, and for whose service and glory she was created.

Indeed Christianity looks upon us all, in one and the same light, as individual spirits before God, dependent upon, and accountable to

him. But, at the same time, it regards us as spirits, sustaining towards each other certain relations, out of which grow certain duties, by the faithful performance of which our mutual improvement may be promoted and our mutual happiness secured. It speaks to us all, I repeat, as individual spirits before God, dependent upon, and accountable to him. This is the one unchangeable view, which christianity takes of us, and it teaches us that this is the one unchangeable view which we should take of ourselves. The relations of life may vary, the circumstances and condition of our being may vary, but this peculiarity, that we are spiritual beings, and this relation to God, as dependent and accountable beings, must always remain.

And this is the view, my young friends, which christianity takes of you. It regards you as individual, immortal spirits before God, his children, dependent upon, and accountable to him. It has seen you children, it now sees you young ladies, it may hereafter see you wives and mothers, it follows you through all these relations, as immortal spirits. With every

variation in your relations, your duties will vary. But you will retain through them all your essential characteristic, as immortal spirits, your essential relation as dependent upon and accountable to God. And so too, christianity may follow you through the various changes of life. It may see you in circumstances of wealth, or in those of poverty, in the enjoyment of bodily health, or visited by bodily disease; as the mistress of your mansion, or as domestics in the same. But in all these variations of condition and circumstance, it looks upon you as still immortal spirits, and regards all these variations as the means appointed by God for the growth, development and improvement of the spirit. And now my young friends I wish you would look upon yourselves in this light. Ever regard yourselves as immortal spirits before God, capable of spiritual improvement and spiritual happiness, as dependent upon and accountable to him.—Ever regard all the relations, all the circumstances, all the duties, and all the trials of life, but as so many temporary arrangements, appointed by God for your spiritual improve-

ment. Fix your thoughts then not upon these temporary arrangements, but upon your essential characteristic, your essential relation.— I have thus pointed out what I regard as the foundation of the peculiar condition of woman in christian lands. The more fully these views are brought home to the feelings, the more will woman be elevated and refined; the more will she be respected and esteemed; the more fully will she become the companion and the counsellor of man. But why so, you will ask? I answer, that woman will learn, from this view to respect and value herself, and to base her self-respect upon right grounds. She will respect herself for what she is, as created by God, for her intellectual, moral and spiritual capacities. She will respect herself, on account of the relation which she sustains to the all perfect Jehovah, as his child. She will respect herself on account of the glorious destiny which is before her, an eternal and spiritual life beyond the grave. She will look, with deep and heartfelt reverence upon that nature, which comes from the hands of God, which is capable of loving and serving and

holding communion with God, and which, if through the power of christian truth and the influences of God's spirit it be developed aright, is to enjoy eternal blessedness in the presence of God and the Savior, in company with holy angels and the spirits of the just made perfect. And this her self-respect, based as it will be upon these grounds, will exert an influence upon all her tastes, upon all her pursuits, upon her whole character. Will she, who feels that she is a spiritual being, dependent upon, accountable to God, destined to an eternal, spiritual life beyond the grave, will such a one, I ask, have a taste for vanity and frivolity? And will such a one spend her time in studying and arranging the various forms of dress, the various rules and laws of fashion, to the neglect of her spiritual cultivation, to the forgetfulness of her eternal destiny? Will she not, on the contrary, be carried by her very self-respect, and by the tastes naturally springing from that self-respect, to pursuits more solid and substantial? Will such a one strive solely to please man, will she not strive principally to please God. Most surely she will.

And, under the influence of these views, her very tastes will lead her to those pursuits and studies, which are solid and substantial and which give stability to character and secure respect. Thus you perceive, that, if woman looks upon herself, through the medium of christianity, she will be almost necessarily and unavoidably led to seek for such acquisitions and to pursue such courses of conduct, as will render her worthy of respect. But, still further, man will regard woman with greater respect and will treat her with greater reverence, when he looks upon her through the christian medium. He will see in her, not a mere play thing, not a mere slave, but an immortal soul, capable of indefinite progress in spiritual improvement. He will reverence her for what she is, and is capable of becoming. His reverence for her spiritual nature will exert a powerful influence upon his manner of treating her.—Will one, who regards woman as an immortal spirit, subject her to all the labors and endurances of a beast of burden? Oh, no. Will he consent that she should be a mere slave? Most surely not. Will he treat her only as a

toy, for occasional trifling and amusement, or regard her only as the means of gratifying passions? It cannot be. His reverence for her essential characteristic and her essential relation will forbid it. He may see woman debased, degraded, and, in the greatest degree, loathsome in her appearance, or he may see her the most light and trifling of creation, decked out in all the gaudy display of worthless finery. But his feelings will, in both cases, and in all similar cases, be only those of pity. He may mourn over her perversion of her high capacities. But he will still be filled with the deepest respect for the tendencies of her nature. He will strive to reclaim her, to save her, to bring her back from her degradation and folly to a correct view of her immortal relations. You perceive, therefore, that the light, in which christianity presents woman, is well calculated, not only to fill woman herself with self-respect, and to lead her to acquisitions and pursuits which will secure the respect of others, but that it is well calculated to cause man to look upon her with deep and heartfelt reverence, for the native tendencies

of her soul. You see then, my young friends, how it is and why it is, that in christian lands the condition of woman is so far elevated above what it is in lands where the sun of righteousness has never dawned.

You have now seen, young ladies, what christianity has done for you. It has set you free from the degrading idea that you are the mere appendages of man, created for his service and bound to make it the object of your life to please him. It has placed you on a level with every other human being, as immortal spirits, bound most closely to the throne of the everlasting Jehovah, standing side by side with your fellow beings, not subjected to them, but on an equality with them, sustaining to them certain relations, out of which grow certain duties. It has raised you from the condition of slaves or play things to that of friends, counsellors and supporters of your fellow beings. It may be that, your father or guardian may make no pretensions to personal religion. Still, I say, that it is to christianity that you are indebted for most of your peculiar privileges. Your father or your guardian,

if not devoted personal christians themselves, live in a christian land, in christian society and under the splendors of the noonday rays of the sun of righteousness. He cannot divest himself of the influences by which he is ever surrounded, and which press upon him from all sides, like the pressure of the atmosphere upon his body. He cannot go counter to the practices which every where prevail, and which, with most, are all powerful. If, then, your father or your guardian be not himself a devoted personal christian, still he gives you a christian education, he treats you with christian kindness. And so of all around you.—They treat you with christian respect. For they are subjected to the general influences of christianity, which are every where around. You perceive then, I repeat, what christianity has done for you. It has revealed you to yourselves and excited within you feelings of self-respect. It has shed a light upon your natures, which has caused you to be respected and revered by others. I do not mean that christianity has actually done all this, in every instance. But I do mean that, wher-

ever its full power is felt and its true spirit has been imbibed, it has done this. I do mean that, the more fully you may yourselves feel the power of christianity upon your hearts, the more will you respect and reverence yourselves; the more careful will you be, in all your pursuits, to select those which are solid, substantial and improving; and consequently the more worthy will you become of the respect and esteem of others. I do mean, still further, that the more fully the power of christian truth is felt in the community, and the more entirely the spirit of christianity prevails, the greater will be the respect and kindness, with which woman will be treated. You see then, I repeat still again, what christianity has done for you. Nay more, you can, at the same time, perceive what she is capable of doing for you, if you will but yield to her claims, and her influences.

LETTER II.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY AT THE HAND OF FEMALES.

Recapitulation of the topics of the preceding letter—

The general subject of this and the succeeding letters stated—Christianity makes two requests—that we should become ourselves truly christian—and strive to make others truly christian—She asks, particularly that all should give her their hearts—This request in accordance with our natures—If the affections are not fixed upon some worthy object, they will fasten themselves upon what is unworthy—if they are not directed to some engrossing object, the individual may become listless and unhappy—The difference between ladies and gentlemen in this respect—Christianity asks in the second place, that her votaries should engage in a course of moral and religious self-cultivation—This illustrated—the cultivation of amiability of disposition—The cultivation of contentedness of feeling—The mistake that the various qualities of a religious character are the result of natural disposition or of special influence corrected—The mistake that we should wait to be irresistibly moved to become religious, corrected—The importance of beginning immediately and of cherishing the slightest serious impressions urged—conclusion.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:

In my last letter, I endeavored to awaken you to a full view of what christianity had done for you. And especially, I endeavored to point out to you the light, in which she has revealed you to yourselves; as marked by the essential characteristic of immortal spirits, as sustaining the essential relation of dependence upon and accountability to God. I endeavored also to point out to you the influence, which this view might be expected to have, and which it ought to have upon your own feelings and pursuits, and upon the esteem in which you might be held by man and the treatment which you might receive at his hands.

In this letter I shall speak directly and particularly of what christianity requires of you. And my first remark is, that christianity makes two distinct general requests of each one of you. In the first place, she asks that you would, each one of you, fashion your own characters upon her model, and would strive to bring yourselves, in all respects, into a conformity with her principles and her spirit. In the second place, she asks that you would each of

you, in your own appropriate spheres, and in the way most becoming and proper, exert your influence to promote the increased power, and the wider spread of these same principles, the more universal prevalence of this spirit. Do you ask how you can best meet and comply with these requisitions? how you can yourselves become truly christian, and how you can exert an influence to make others truly christian?— I answer, that it will be my object, in this series of letters, to point out more particularly the way in which you can comply with these two general requisitions of christianity.

And, first, I remark that christianity asks, more particularly, that you should give her your hearts. She regards you, as possessing the purest and most ardent affections. But she sees you in danger of ruin, social, intellectual and moral ruin, through the instrumentality of these very affections, for she sees them in danger of being perverted, of becoming depraved. She is unwilling that they should be fastened supremely upon any thing, other than the highest, purest and holiest objects. She is unwilling that you should set your affections supreme-

ly upon social enjoyment, upon intellectual cultivation, or even upon mere moral improvement. She would not have you disregard these things. But she would have you regard spiritual or religious improvement, as the one great object of life? she would have you set your affections upon the spiritual enjoyments of another world, as the supreme object of desire, the great end to be sought. Having directed the attention to these, religious improvement in this life, and to religious enjoyment in the world to come, and fixed the affections upon them, as the end of desire and of effort, she teaches that social, intellectual and moral improvement and enjoyment are to be sought, as subsidiary to and instrumental of spiritual progress. Religious or spiritual improvement, then, should be the one grand, all-absorbing object of desire and effort. All else is to be viewed as subsidiary to this, all else is to be estimated by the character of its influence upon this; upon religious or spiritual improvement, upon a right preparation for the enjoyment of religious or spiritual happiness beyond the grave. Christianity permits you to love all things which are pure and innocent,

in different degrees, according to their different degrees of real worth. But she asks that you should love her and the objects which she presents to your notice, with all the strength of your most ardent affections. She asks that you would give her your hearts, that you would give her yourselves, yield yourselves up to be moulded and fashioned in all your habits of thought, feeling and desire, in all your words and actions, by her instructions. She asks that you would love her supremely and serve her devotedly. Such, my young friends, is the first request of christianity, at your hands. She will accept of no partial devotion, of no divided affections. To become, in all respects, what christianity requires you to be, must be, with each one of you, the supreme object of desire and of effort.

And this request is reasonable. It is in accordance with the demands of your own natures. For, unless the affections become engrossingly fixed upon some worthy object, there is great danger that they will either attach themselves to some inferior and unworthy object, perhaps even to what is absurd and ridiculous,

or will wither away, leaving the individual to become entirely and disgustingly selfish. Have there not been, I ask, ladies, who, to all human appearances, have become entirely absorbed in their devotion to a lap dog, manifesting an almost maternal anxiety for its comfort, spending much of that most precious of all earthly possessions, time, in childishly watching and tending the animal? And yet these claimed to be Ladies, possessed of immortal spirits, of heaven born affections! Ladies, possessed of reason and conscience! Must not every one exclaim, at the sight, at the very thought of such a person, oh how perverted, how debased her affections! I have taken an extreme case. But it shows the tendency of the affections of the human heart, if not directed to elevated and worthy objects, to descend and fasten themselves upon those which are low and unworthy.

Nor am I certain that there are not many corresponding cases in female society. Is it not often the case, that ladies, and young ladies in particular, permit their affections to become fixed upon the vanities of dress and fashion? Is it not sometimes the case that they are rendered

miserably unhappy, if their dress be not as gay, or as rich or as fashionable as the dresses of their companions? Is it not the case that young ladies sometimes permit their thoughts to be engrossed and their affections absorbed in the ceremonies of a party or the attentions of the beaux, so much so, that they can scarcely speak, think, or dream of any thing else? And to what is this owing, but to the absence of some higher and holier object of affection. Christianity does not ask, my young friends, that you should be utterly indifferent to dress, etiquette or attention. It asks only that you should assign them their proper places, and give them that degree of regard and consideration only, which they really deserve. And wherever she is received into the heart and embraced with a living faith, she produces the characters she wishes to see. For, I ask can it be possible that the young lady whose heart has been touched with gospel influences, who has imbibed the smallest portion of the gospel spirit, can it be possible, I ask, that such a young lady can suffer her thoughts to be engrossed, or her soul to be disturbed by these comparatively trifling objects of regard? Most

certainly not. The claims of christianity, then, are in accordance with the demands of your own nature.

Still further, where the affections are not fixed upon some worthy object of pursuit and, the mind is not employed in the attainment of that object, there will be much unhappiness. I have: my young friends, witnessed much of unhappiness, among those with whom I am associated, and I have sought earnestly for the causes of it. These are various. There is poverty. there are afflictions. There are disappointments. There are anxious and disturbing imaginations. These, and many others are causes of unhappiness. But I have been led to the conclusion; from what I have myself seen, that there is no one cause, which is every day producing so much unhappiness, with so many individuals as the want of some worthy object of affection and pursuit. I have seen I think, more real unhappiness produced by having nothing to do, or nothing which engrosses the thoughts and affections, and which from its very worth, gives a sweet and calm self-satisfaction to those engaged in its pursuit, than

by any other cause. I have indeed, seen parents in great anxiety as to the comforts of life for themselves and their children. But the efforts, they were compelled to make, served to allay their anxiety, and the unexpected supplies, which they have at times received, have filled them with great and resigned trust in the wisdom and goodness of God's overruling providence. But, on the other hand, I have witnessed tenfold unhappiness in those, who were free from want or the danger of want, but whose affections were not fixed upon some worthy object of pursuit. When the question has been asked me, in regard to such, 'what can allay their unhappiness?' I have answered, that, to human eyes, it appeared that nothing but actual calamity, or their becoming truly religious can ever accomplish the object. I feel perfectly safe, then, in saying, that, where you will find one unhappy, from the various causes to which I have alluded, you will find ten rendered miserably unhappy, from the want of some worthy and engrossing object of thought, affection and pursuit. Here, too, the requirements of

christianity are in accordance with your natures. She presents to your notice the highest and holiest objects of affection and pursuits, and ask that you should devote yourself supremely to them. And thus she asks you to pursue the course, which your own natures demand, the course, without which, your affections are in danger of becoming fixed upon unworthy objects, or your soul rendered unhappy from the want of some worthy and engrossing object of pursuit.

But why, you may ask, are these remarks addressed particularly to ladies? Because, I answer, there is a difference between your situation and that of gentlemen in this respect. Gentlemen, almost unavoidably, become interested in some outward but engrossing object of thought, affection and pursuit. There are the public affairs of the nation. There are the engrossing cares of business. Indeed, there are a variety of engrossing objects of pursuit around them, which demand their attention and secure their affections. But ladies are differently situated in this respect.—They do not become devoted to the same de-

gree, in these objects of outward interest. Their engrossing objects of thought and affection must be within, must have their seat in the heart, must be self-cherished and inwardly cherished.

I do not say that all men are devoted to outward objects of engrossing interest, but that such is generally the case, that such is the natural influence of their peculiar circumstances. There are exceptions. There are men whose thoughts and affections are not fastened upon high and worthy objects, nor upon engrossing objects of any kind. And the result with them is the same as with ladies.— They become exquisits in dress, and spend their time, it may be, in dancing attendance upon the most light and frivolous of the female community. Their most worthy efforts are directed to the arranging of a boquet.— Their highest mental efforts consist in selecting and presenting flattering compliments, or in penning sonnets to the personal charms of some lady weak enough to be flattered by their attentions. They are regarded with contempt by the reasonable and reflecting

among yourselves. You perceive, therefore, that the law, which I have pointed out, applies with equal force to man as to woman, the law, that where the attention and the affections are not directed to high and worthy, or at least to interesting and engrossing objects of pursuit, they soon fasten themselves upon those which are unworthy; and that, consequently, all true, rational, elevating happiness is lost. I do not say that the circumstances in which man is placed, are more favorable than those, in which woman is placed, to the right direction, and proper development of the affections. I only say that such is the fact, that they are differently situated. The attention and the affections of the one, are almost invariably interested in some outward, and engrossing object of pursuit. The object of pursuit and affection with the other, must be something within, which has relation to the internal and spiritual.

You see, then, my young friends, what christianity asks of you, and why she asks it, and what in all probability, will be your characters, and your condition, unless you comply

with her requests. She would make you worthy of yourselves, worthy of that image of God in which the human soul was originally created, sadly debased and depraved though it now be. She would make you worthy of the station you occupy among God's creatures. Nay more, she would make you worthy the presence, the society and the happiness of heaven. She is desirous of presenting you, without spot and blameless, at the throne of God's mercy. And, that she may do this, that she may transform your very souls into the heavenly image, she asks that you would give her your hearts. And will you, my young friends, will you refuse to do this? Just look forward for a few years and inquire what may then be your situations and your characters. Shall it be that any one of you will hereafter become the object of contempt or of pity among your acquaintances, on account of the trifling, frivolous, and unworthy nature of the objects of your thought, affection and pursuit? Shall it be, that any one of you will hereafter live only for the pleasures of dress, etiquette, and cer-

emony? Shall it be, that any one of you will hereafter be the slave of foolish and needless anxieties, ever tormenting yourselves, and ever annoying all around you? God forbid. That it may not be so, depends upon yourselves under God. That it may not be so, I would, most earnestly, entreat every young lady, who may read these pages, to resolve, with a firm reliance upon the blessing of God, and with fervent prayer for his aid, to resolve that she will give her heart to her God and her Savior, that she will at once embrace the religion of Jesus, and seek for that true and living faith, which works by love and purifies the heart where it dwells.

In the second place, christianity asks of you, that you would engage, resolutely, and with a determination to persevere, in a course of moral and religious self-cultivation. This may seem to you to be but a common topic of remark. And yet, the thoughts which I wish in this connection to present to you, are not, I believe, common. Were I to urge the importance of self-cultivation, in regard to the various powers of the mind, in regard to the

memory, the judgment, the taste, you would perceive at once, the propriety of my attempt. But in regard to moral and religious improvement, your feelings, I fear, are very different. You feel that the various qualities, which go to make up a correct moral and religious character, must be the result of natural temperament or of special influences. But such is not, I am satisfied, the feeling inspired by a correct view of the claims of christianity. She would first, secure your hearts; she would have your affections fixed, supremely, upon the objects which she presents, God, the Saviour, holiness and heaven. Then, under the influence of this absorbing devotion to herself, she would have you go on in the work of moral and religious self-cultivation. That you may perceive more fully what she requires of you in this respect, let us dwell for a moment upon some traits of moral and religious character.

1st. I would speak of amiableness of disposition and of character. When it is said that such an one is an amiable young lady, the feeling is, that such is her natural temper-

ament. But there is the feeling also, that others differ from her in this natural temperament, and therefore cannot be expected to resemble her in this characteristic. And yet christianity requires that every one should be amiable. I know of no such character as an unamiable christian. I have, indeed, as, I have no doubt, you all have, seen those who make high pretensions to religious character, who were yet extremely unamiable. But this only shews that, how much soever the other parts of their character may have been influenced by religion, its power has not yet reached this characteristic. Religion requires that all should be amiable, and yet religion is addressed to persons of different temperament. The amiableness then, which religion requires, must be the result, not of natural temperament, but of moral effort. And what she asks you to become, she will, if taken to your hearts, help you to be. She teaches you that every one around is your brother or your sister—worthy, in their native tendencies and capacities, of your love. She teaches that, if the characters and manners of those

around you are not such as to enlist your affections, yet that they have souls, which God loves, which the Saviour loves, and which are worthy of your love. Nay more. She fills your heart with love for them. And is it not true, as a general rule, that we are amiable in our deportment towards those we love, and that the stronger be our love to them, even though it may take the form of pity, the more kind and amiable will be our deportment towards them.

Again, religion teaches you that those petty crosses and vexations, which disturb your equanimity, render you fretful, peevish, and unamiable, are ordered or permitted by God, and are to be regarded as the means, if rightly improved, of your spiritual good; that they are ordered in spirit and in love, to try, strengthen, and improve your moral and religious character. When you think of this, when you consider, that a calm, quiet and amiable deportment, under these provocations, will secure your religious improvement, when you consider, that God is looking upon you to see how you meet them, and stands ready

to grant you aid to overcome; you will not, I trust, suffer them to render you unamiable in your deportment. Religion then stands ready, with her instructions, her promises and her influences, to make you what she asks you to become. There is indeed a natural difference of temperament; some have greater effort to make, in order to become what religion requires, in this respect, than others. But those, whose efforts are the greatest, and whose struggles are the most severe here, may not be called upon to struggle so severely in regard to other parts of the character. And you will permit me to recommend this trait of amiableness, to your particular attention, as being peculiarly important to ladies. Men are so situated as to be exposed to great and prostrating trials, but woman is exposed to a thousand little, every day petty crosses and vexations, which are extremely annoying, which often come upon her at unawares, and which too often render her fretful and peevish and unamiable. It is therefore peculiarly important to you that you cultivate a resolute and determined amiableness of character.

2. Again, there is contentedness of disposition and character. This is a trait, which we usually regard as the result of natural temperament. And yet, Paul says, that he had *learned to be contented*. The spirit of christianity, if not its direct injunctions, requires that we should cherish and cultivate a cheerful acquiescence in the allotments of Providence. There may be then, there is a contentment, which is a moral quality. It is not the result of natural promptings, but of moral effort, *a determined contentment*. This state of mind, religion requires each one to seek. And in this respect too, she enables men to become what she requires them to be. She teaches that the allotments of Providence are not the blind results of chance, nor the stern decisions of inexorable fate, but the kind and judicious adjustments of infinite love and infinite wisdom. She teaches that every event of life, how unpropitious soever it may seem, in itself, in its circumstances and immediate consequences, may, if improved by us aright, be regarded as a blessing, in reference to our higher and spiritual improvement. And what

is more, she fixes the affections upon things high and holy, upon objects which are far above the pleasures and possessions of this life, our hopes of obtaining which, are not destroyed by any changes or disappointments in these. In this way, religion shows us why we should be contented, and directs our attention to objects, which are of infinite and eternal value, the pursuit of which naturally tends to make us comparatively indifferent to changes and disappointment in things of only temporary duration and importance. We are then, my young friends, to cherish and cultivate contentment. We are not to expect that our contentment is to spring only from natural temperament, nor yet that it is to be given to us by special influences, nor that it is to exist only in the most prosperous and favorable circumstances of our lives, when there is no cause in operation, which could possibly make us discontented. Our contentment is to be a moral quality, cherished with much care, resting on our confidence in the wisdom and goodness of God's overruling Providence, and resulting from our engaged-

ness in the pursuit of things heavenly and eternal. It should be a *determined contentment*, manifesting its influence in all its various circumstances of the life.

I have said, my young friends, that religion asks you, in the second place, to engage in a course of moral self-cultivation. And I have illustrated what I mean, by a reference to two qualities of character, amiableness and contentment. I have not selected these because they are more important than others, but because they are more often, than others, attributed to natural temperament. I have wished, thus gently, to correct an important, because it is a dangerous, mistake. The mistake, that the various qualities, which go to make up a perfect moral and religious character, are the result of natural temperament, or of special influences. I have wished to establish the conviction in your minds, that whatever may be your natural temperament, your character is to be fashioned after the christian model, and that all the various parts of your character are to be the results of your own efforts, in reliance upon those influences,

which God is ever ready to grant, influences granted, not to supercede the necessity of effort, but to strengthen and second the efforts put forth. Whenever, then, you see in others, or picture to yourselves, a single characteristic or quality, which goes to make up a perfect christian character, consider, I beseech you, that such characteristic is a proper object of effort, and, that, with the divine blessing, which will never be withheld when desired, you have the power to acquire that characteristic. You can be amiable; you can be contented, you can regulate your affections. You can cultivate tenderness of conscience and cherish feelings of devotion. God helping you, you can do these things.

But I have wished in this letter to correct another prevalent and dangerous mistake. I believe that many, who would gladly be religious, are waiting for a chance, which shall render more self-cultivation necessary. Suppose some young lady should be moved by what I have now written, and should come to me for counsel in regard to her efforts, and I should point out to her some one fault in her

moral character, and urge her to commence the christian course by attempting, in reliance upon the blessing of God, the reformation of this one fault. That young lady would have no doubt about her ability or duty in this particular. But she would feel that this was not religion, that this was mere moral effort.—Whether it would be a part of religion or not, would depend upon the motives and feelings, which might prompt the effort. The infidel, the atheist even may engage in the same moral self-cultivation, in which the christian engages. But then he would be actuated by different motives, and would be guided by different rules. The christian would be actuated by a regard to his own spiritual improvement, by desires of heavenly happiness, by a constant thought of the presence of God and of his own accountability to him, and the rule by which he would guide his efforts would be the revealed will of God. But the influences of religion do not render unnecessary this self-cultivation, on the contrary, they press it home upon the heart and conscience with ten-fold more power. You see again my young

friends, what christianity asks of you, in order that she may do all for you which she is capable of doing. She asks that you should give her your hearts, in other words, that you should set your affections upon religious improvement, as the one grand and all absorbing object of your efforts. And then, she asks that you should, under her guidance, press forward in the right formation of your own moral characters, that you should resolutely engage in the work of fashioning your own moral character, in all its parts, of feelings, desires, affections, conversation and conduct, upon the model which she presents.

But when, you ask, and how, shall we commence our compliance with the requirements of christianity? These questions suggest another important and dangerous mistake. Many are waiting for more powerful religious impressions, impressions which shall change all their feelings, and entirely banish from the mind and heart, at once and forever, all feelings and affections hostile to religion. Or, they are unwilling to begin with the reformation of a single prominent fault; they hope,

ere long, to have the subject so brought to their minds, and to have their feelings so moved, and to commence the reformation of the whole character at once. And, while thus waiting, they are neglecting the calls addressed to them, and the influence granted. This, I have said, is a mistake. And in answer to the questions when and how shall we commence a compliance with the requirements of christianity, I would say, begin this day. Begin with the religious impressions now upon your mind. Begin by reforming the fault which first presents itself to your notice. Is there one young lady, who has read what I have thus far written, who feels the slightest desire to please God, to enjoy eternal happiness in his presence, to form and sustain a religious character, and who at this moment, remembers that she has not practiced the daily reading of the scriptures, and daily approach to the throne of grace in prayer, let her under the influence of the feelings of which she is now conscious, and the impressions that are now upon her, commence, this day, these neglected practices. If any young lady is con-

scious of having, in times past, indulged in thoughtless and frivolous conversation, let her begin, this day, the correction of this fault. If any young lady is conscious of having, in times past, confined her thoughts to the vanities of dress and fashion and amusement, and of having spent her time in preparations for, or conversations about these, to the neglect of the more important concerns of her soul, and the service of her God, and is now experiencing compunctions of conscience, faint though they be, let her, under the influence of these compunctions, seek unto God, through Christ, for pardon. Let her, this day, and without waiting for stronger feelings, commence the reformation of these faults. And in general, I would repeat the direction already given in answer to the questions when and how shall we commence a compliance with the requisitions of christianity. Begin this day. Begin under the religious impressions now upon your mind. Begin, with reforming whatever fault first presents itself to your notice. But to these directions I would now add another. It is this. Begin with the feel-

ing that it is on God that you depend for success, and with fervent prayer that he would deepen your religious impressions, that he would strengthen your faith in, and devotion to, the christian religion, your faith in, and devotion to, your spiritual natures and capacities, that he would enlighten your minds in regard to truth and duty, that he would lay open to you all the hidden iniquities of your hearts, all the various faults in your character, and that he would crown your efforts, in religious self-cultivation, with success. If you will commence this day, in this way, you may be cheered by the well founded hope, the confident expectation, that although the struggle is, at first, severe, and the progress at first, but slow, yet that, in the end, you will reach the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

And, now my friends, you have learned the requisitions, which christianity makes of every one of you. Will you regard these requisitions? It is for you, in the exercise of your own free will, to say. No miracle will ever be wrought to compel you to regard them.

Will you regard the claim and the requirements of christianity? Will you give your hearts to religion, and make religious improvement the great object of your affections, desires and efforts? Will you commence a course of moral and religious self-cultivation? And will you commence that course this day, under the religious impressions which you may now experience, and with the fault in your characters, which first presents itself to your notice? These are questions for you to answer. Upon the manner in which you may answer them, depends, in a great degree, your future character, and your future happiness. Fix them in your minds, carry them with you, as you close the book. Make them the subject of your thoughts, of your conversation and of your prayers.

LETTER III.

DUTY BEFORE PLEASURE.

Recapitulation of former letters—a dangerous habit prevailing among young ladies—the habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty—Instances in proof from wealthier circles—from the middling classes—from those in indigent circumstance—three steps in the formation of this habit noticed—1st. Education made mere amusement. 2d. The reading provided for young ladies of the most frivolous kind; exciting only the desire for pleasure rather than for improvement. 3d. Our young ladies are not accustomed gradually and as they are able to the labors of the household. The effects of this habit, the source of great unhappiness, frivolity and extravagance—it unfits young ladies for all the exigencies and emergencies of future life—it exerts a preventive or a deleterious influence upon religious improvement and christian character—Appeals against this habit—to the higher classes—to those in more moderate circumstances—to mothers—to young ladies themselves.

It may not be amiss, my young friends, to remind you, that, in my first letter, I endeavored to awaken you to a full view of what

christianity had done for you, to the truths, that she had revealed you to yourselves as immortal spirits, dependent upon and accountable to God, that she had set you free from the degrading thought, that you were but the appendages of man, and had filled you with the ennobling idea, that you are emanations from the infinite and all perfect spirit; that she has thus filled you with deep reverence for yourselves, for your own natures, tendencies, capacities, and possible spiritual elevation; that she had inspired in men deep respect for you, as intellectual and spiritual beings, and filled their hearts with kindness to you; and that she had, in this way elevated your rank and ameliorated your condition. And why did I say this ? Because, my young friends, I wished, if possible, to turn your attention away from the vanity and the frivolity, which are every where around you, threatening to absorb all your thoughts, to paralyse all your energies, to bring your immortal spirits down from angel flights, and confine them to the mere baby house pleasures, and the doll-dressing employments of

infant intellects. Nay more, I wished, if possible, and, through the blessing of God upon my efforts, to awaken you to the thought that, if God had seen fit to create you immortal spirits, and to place you in the near relationship of dependence upon and accountability to himself; still further, that if God, from his infinite love for your spiritual natures, had seen fit to send his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, to save you from the love, the power, the consequences of sin; and yet further still, that, if Christ had looked upon your spiritual natures, debased and depraved though they were, with a love stronger than his love of life, with a love which made him willing to sacrifice himself upon the cross for their rescue from the thralldom and the present and future consequences of sin; I wished, I say, if possible, to awaken you to the thought in all its power, that, if God the almighty, and Jesus the Savior, had felt such love for your spiritual natures, and had made such efforts to free these spiritual natures from the bondage and the inevitable consequences of sin, and to

elevate them to the happiness of holiness and of heaven; then these spiritual natures were worthy of your own most serious thoughts, most diligent and careful watch and cultivation. And, my friends, just dwell for a moment upon the thought. Has God created you in his own image, has he called you his children, has he bestowed upon you spiritual capacities and made you capable of loving, serving and enjoying him, has he sent his only begotten, his dearly beloved Son to save you from a debasing and degrading slavery, and has Jesus, the Savior, subjected himself to the ignominious death of the cross, that he might rescue your souls from wretchedness and ruin, and train them up for the holiness of heaven, and are not these spiritual natures worthy of your deepest reverence, of your most heartfelt devotion, of your highest efforts in their right training and proper development, in their cultivation and improvement? Oh, it cannot, I have said to myself, it cannot be possible, that any young lady, with these thoughts upon her mind, can remain indifferent to the high and holy purposes

for which she was created, can any longer, live for mere frivolity and vanity, or for a mere formal, outward and heartless morality, to the neglect of her immortal and spiritual interests, her soul's salvation. Under the influence of these feelings, I wished to commence my letters to you by awakening an earnest longing after spiritual improvement and heavenly happiness.

In my last letter, I endeavored to urge home upon your attention, the claims of religion upon you, in regard to your moral and religious character; to show, that she first demands your heart, nothing less than the purest and holiest and most ardent affections of your soul; and that she then asks, that you would engage, at once, with resolute determination, and under her guidance, in a course of moral and religious self-cultivation. And after hinting at the way in which you are to pursue this moral and religious self-cultivation, I closed by urging you to commence your compliance with the requirements of christianity, at once, with the impressions then upon your minds, with the reformation

of the fault in your character, whatever it may be, which should first present itself to your notice, with an humble feeling of dependence upon God, and with fervent prayer to him for guidance and assistance. And why did I say this? Because, I answer, I wished to aid you to begin your religious course aright. Some there are, who commence, what they regard as their religious course, without giving their hearts to God and his service, but in reliance upon their own energies, and in efforts at mere moral improvement. Such make no regular and valuable religious progress. Indeed, they make no *religious* progress at all. They are ever halting. All their efforts are feeble or fitful, one moment vigorous, and the next moment relaxed. Forsaking the unfailing support of God's ever ready and promised assistance, and relying solely upon their own resolutions and energies, they soon find that they have been leaning upon a broken staff. They endeavor to remove the inward and deep-seated disorder of their souls, by applications to its particular outward manifestations, while

they overlook, or entirely neglect, the seat of the disorder itself.

'Then, there are others, whose religious course commences in an entire change of feelings. But here they stop, they rest satisfied with this change of feelings. They do not go resolutely forward, under the influence of their renewed feelings, in a course of moral and religious self-cultivation, in efforts to strengthen and render more influential their principles, to purify and elevate their affections, to render more tender and susceptible their consciences, to imbibe more fully and breathe more constantly the christian spirit. And the consequence is, that you often discover, in the characters of such, conduct which is highly unchristian, in close connection with religious fervor. The tongue, that is one moment employed in the praise of God, is, the very next moment, perhaps, employed in circulating scandal in regard to man. The conscience that would be pained at the omission of an iota of the creed, looks quietly on, while a neighbor is deprived of his dues. These are the ways, in which

many make a wrong beginning in their religious course. I have wished, if possible, to point out to you the right way of beginning. I would have you begin, by seeking an entire a thorough, a radical change of heart, that so your affections may be set supremely upon God and his service, upon Jesus and the salvation which is by him. And then, in immediate connection with this devotion of heart to God, yea, as the very manifestation of its power, and as the means by which it is carried forward to perfection. I would have you commence a course of religious and moral self-cultivation. For I have hoped that, by beginning in this way, the more carefully you might cherish your love to God, the more constant and faithful you might be in your religious exercises, the more diligent and conscientious you would become in the right discharge of all your various duties. While, on the other hand, I have hoped that, the more diligent and conscientious you might be in your efforts for moral and religious improvement, the more carefully would you cherish your love to God, and the more en-

tirely and devotedly would you give your hearts to Christ and his religion, and that thus, these two, which are often separated, the devotion of the heart to the service of religion, and the exertion of the energies for moral and religious improvement, would be united, in well adjusted harmony, to produce the perfect exemplification of the christian character, devotion of heart, giving inward purity and steady zeal, and outward obedience, producing uprightness in dealings, knidness in social intercourse, yea, holiness of life, in all the varying scenes through which you may be called to pass.

I should have closed my remarks, my young friends, upon moral and religious character, with the suggestions of my last letter, had I not believed, that there is one circumstance in the present training and prevailing habits of many of our young ladies, which is so specious in its appearance, that it does not excite the fears, either of those who are its victims or of their friends, while, at the same time, it is so deleterious in its influences as to weaken, if not entirely efface every im-

pression that may be made, and paralyze or prevent every effort that may be put forth. Yes, my young friends, I speak, with deep conviction of the truth of what I say, and with feelings deeply saddened at the thought that it is true, when I say, that there exists and prevails among many of you, a habit of life which must be broken through, which must be done away, before you will be permanently happy in yourselves, or extensively useful to others; before we can hope that you will perform well the duties of your respective relations on earth, or make proper preparation for the enjoyments of heaven.

Do you ask what this habit of life is, which prevails so extensively among young ladies, which is so specious in its appearances, and yet so deleterious in its consequences? I answer; it is the habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty; for the mere enjoyment of the hour, rather than for the higher purpose of being useful, of doing good, of securing personal improvement and promoting domestic and social enjoyment. This habit I say, prevails among many young ladies.

Do you ask for the proof? Go visit the more wealthy circles of society. And what, I ask, do you find to be the employment of many of the young ladies there? They spend much time upon dress, in conversing about it, in studying its changes, in arranging its forms, and all for what? Is it, that, by understanding these things, they may themselves be prepared for usefulness to others, or for independent self-support, should a change come over the circumstances of their parents? Well would it be, were these their objects. But it is only that they may gratify their vanity, or perhaps, in the hope that they may set off their charms to greater advantage, and render themselves more agreeable to friends and visitors. Then there comes a little light reading, the last new novel, the most splendid and fashionable annual, or some monthly publication, designed, as it is announced on the title-page, expressly for ladies, and filled with its plates of fashions and its succession of idle and love-sick tales. All is mere froth, nothing solid, nothing substantial, nothing to inform the mind, or warm the heart, or

strengthen the principles, or improve the character, nothing to render the young lady herself more happy in resources of her own, or more capable of promoting the improvement and happiness of those with whom she may associate. Then comes a little needle-work, for it would be ungenteel or vulgar to engage in that, which is more course and useful, in making or repairing the garments of the family. Then it may be a little shopping, not for purchases, but for pleasure, followed by visiting and receiving visits, not visits of friendship, where the heart is warmed, and the mind excited by an interchange of thought and an exercise of the affections, but mere calls of ceremony, to comply with the rules of fashion, indulge in idle gossip, and, it may be, to gather food for scandal. Such I say is the manner, in which day after day is too often spent by many young ladies among the more wealthy and fashionable circles of society. Do you say that I am speaking in regard to what I do not know. I answer, I speak only of what I have seen and of what my heart has been pained to behold.

Do you say that I have looked at these things only through a colored medium and with jaundiced eyes. I cannot believe that I have done so, when I find my own opinions confirmed, by so accurate an observer of manners, and one who has enjoyed so good an opportunity of knowing the habits and practices of females in the wealthier circles of society, as Miss Sedgwick, the author of several interesting works with which you are acquainted. And Miss Sedgwick, in a late work, says, 'How many lives are consumed in utter frivolity. A little light reading, a little shopping, visiting, dressing and undressing, and so day after day passes away.' Such is the language of a lady, who has been favored with opportunities of knowing, and who is well qualified to judge, in regard to what she writes, I cannot, then, but feel that there is too much of truth in the description I have given, of the way in which many young ladies, in the wealthier circles of society, spend their time and employ their thoughts.

But the habit, of which I speak, is not confined to the wealthier circles of society. I

have myself seen the family, where the father was a hard laboring mechanic, a man of worth and respectability of character, and the mother an industrious and prudent housewife, spending the day in the faithful discharge of her domestic duties, while yet, the daughters were, to use the language of the lady already quoted, the daughters were 'the mere ornamental furniture of their father's house.' Their minds were not interested in promoting the good of the family, their time was not employed in securing personal improvement. They were aping the manners of those more wealthy than themselves, and, that they might avoid vulgar attention to pressing duties, and useful labor and might appear more truly genteel, they spend their time also in light reading, shopping, visiting and dressing. This have I seen—nay more, I have mingled enough in this class of society to know that this is not an isolated or a singular case. I verily believe, that too many are the cases, among what may be regarded as composing the middle interest in society, where the father and the mother are toiling on, day after day,

with ardent affection and unwearied diligence, but with mistaken kindness, in order to procure the means of supporting the daughters as young ladies, in a life of idleness, frivolity and vanity.

The habit of which I am speaking, extends itself even into families, which are in comparatively indigent circumstances, and where every effort and every energy of every member of the family, should be put in requisition to secure an honest and independent support. There are fathers and there are mothers, who are filled with that foolish pride, which makes them unwilling that their daughters should make themselves acquainted with any of those arts, which are appropriate to women, or seek, among the more wealthy, that employment which will afford the means of support. Consequently, the daughters are trained up in idleness, or in mere frivolous and useless occupations, accustomed to spend their time only in the pursuit of pleasure, and are sent forth into society to become useless and wretched incumbrances. There is among some the feeling that there is disgrace attach-

ed to poverty, and, consequently, every effort is made to avoid the appearance and the acknowledgment of poverty. There is, too, the feeling, that there is disgrace in the circumstances that a female is laboring for a support, and, especially, that there is deep disgrace attached to some kinds of employment. What mistaken notions are these! Disgrace attaches itself to conduct and not to condition. Respectability, in either male or female, is the attribute of character and not of employment. There is no disgrace in honest poverty, and where meekness and industry adorn the condition, they are well calculated to secure respect, sympathy and alleviation. But, if in the midst of poverty there is idleness, pride, with feelings above work, and vanity and extravagance, these qualities of character, and not the circumstances of condition, excite general contempt or pity. There is nothing ungenteel or vulgar, in a young lady's engaging in labor for the support of herself and the assistance of her friends. The disgrace, where there is disgrace, is attached to idleness, pride, vanity, and that

mental imbecility, that vacuity of mind, that utter heartlessness, and needless dependence, which are the natural consequences of these. To quote, still again, the language of the lady already twice referred to, 'there is no occupation so vulgar as indolence and vanity.' A moment's reflection, one would suppose, must teach this. Here, for example, is a young lady, whose parents are in indigent circumstances. She has made herself acquainted with some employment, by means of which she can secure constant occupation. In this way she supports herself, becomes independent of parental exertions, and is able to do something for the alleviation of parental wants. In time her aged parents need still greater assistance. This she is able to render them. She who in infancy was the object of so much parental anxiety, and care and effort, is now able to render some humble return for what she has received. Now I ask if every true heart, every sound mind, every one, in short, whose respect is worth enjoying, does not feel deep, and heartfelt respect for such a character. But suppose she had thought it un-

genteel, or vulgar, or derogatory to the rank and condition once sustained by parents or ancestors, and had spent her time in idleness, in vainly striving to ape the more wealthy, in dress, visiting and fashion, suppose she had cast herself in helpless dependence upon rich relatives, would she not soon have become a burden to friends, and an object of contempt or pity to all? But I trust I have said enough on this point, to establish the truth of my position, or at least enough to bring to your minds instances which have fallen within your own observation, of those, *who live for pleasure rather than for duty*; for the mere enjoyment of the passing hour, rather than for usefulness or improvement.

But perhaps you may ask for a more particular description of what I mean by living for pleasure rather than for duty. I can best answer this inquiry, by describing the process of training, by which young ladies are brought to this condition, and under which they form this habit. And first, there is an error in the very process of education. . At the present day it is the position of many, that all educa-

tion, and especially the earliest steps in education, must be made so interesting as to become mere play, that so the child may be drawn along by her mere love for the amusement which the process of education affords. If a particular school does not please, it must be deserted. If any particular branch of study does not interest, it must be exchanged for one that does. All close and faithful and persevering application to prescribe lessons is decried, in the earlier stages of education, and the whole work must be accomplished by the conversations of the teacher, and these conversations must be made to interest. But what is the plain truth in regard to all this? Children love to be amused, and, if the teacher can tell stories in regard to the various branches of study, they will pay the deepest attention. And what is the effect? Instances with which I have been made acquainted, prove that children, thus trained in their earliest efforts, soon acquire an habitual loathing of all close and continued mental application. If you will tell them a story, they are all attention, if you assign them a lesson to be stud-

ied, there is fretting, murmuring, and a neglect of the lesson. Nay, worse. There is formed the habit of asking in regard to all studies, not, whether the lesson has been assigned; not, whether the faithful study of the lesson be a duty; not whether it may be used in after life, but whether it is interesting and pleasing. And thus the whole process of education becomes an inquiry for pleasure. And the school girl, even while acquiring her education, is living not for an unreserved devotion to duty, but for pleasure. And then this habit of mind soon exerts a controlling influence over the character. Are the commands and acquirements of parents pleasing? They are obeyed with alacrity. But if they are otherwise, they are either entirely disregarded, or obeyed with reluctance and murmuring. This error in education extends, in some instances, even to the Sabbath school and to religious instruction. If the child is not pleased to attend, because she does not find that her teacher possesses the power of amusing, she is permitted to stay away; if the prescribed lesson require patient study, and

close application, it is omitted, and the cry is, that all must be done by the oral instruction of the teacher. I was once called, in the absence of a friend, to take charge of a class in a Sabbath school. The children came, all bright and happy, but with no lessons. They came to be amused by the stories of the teacher. And what must be the consequences of this view? It is to connect even with the subject of religion the same search for pleasure.

Now, in view of the future character, and of what God requires of us, this seems to me to be in a great degree wrong. I speak not now in regard to intellectual improvement, although, it must be evident to every one, that a lesson, the knowledge of which is acquired by one's own persevering efforts, is, in an intellectual point of view, worth ten times the amount of knowledge passively received from the lips of another. But I speak more particularly of the influence of these views upon moral character. I would, indeed, have every study made as interesting as it can be made, by clearness of statement,

and simplicity of illustration. But, then I would have the child accustomed to go regularly and quietly through, whatever is prescribed, because such a course is the course of duty, without ever asking the question, whether it be interesting or not. If this habit be once firmly fixed, it will be of more value, in regard to the future character, than all the knowledge that can possibly be acquired.

I have said, that the first step in the formation of the evil habit, of which I am speaking, is in wrong notions of education. The second step, is to be found in the reading which is provided for the young, and especially that, to which the attention of young ladies is principally directed. The object of whatever is thus prepared, is to *interest*, to *amuse*. And most of those books, which do not succeed in this, are soon thrown aside. Is their attention directed to history? Oh, that is dull. The same scenes and characters and events must, with much embellishment, be wove into a highly wrought work of fiction, in order to secure readers. Is a didactic work upon

morals put into the hands of young ladies? In seven cases out of ten, it is thrown aside as absolutely insufferable. If the same moral instructions are conveyed in a fictitious narrative, it will secure readers. Though, in seven cases out of ten, it is more than probable, that the story is only remembered, without even a guess as to the moral instruction intended to be conveyed. To this subject of reading, I shall refer again, when, in a future letter I speak of intellectual improvement. What I now wish you to notice, is, that the great object of reading is not *improvement* but *amusement*; not *profit, intellectual and moral profit, but the mere enjoyment of pleasure*. And, thus, the reading of the day tends to strengthen and confirm the habit, commenced in early education, and of seeking only pleasure in all the circumstances of life, of living for pleasure rather than for duty. This then, the character of the reading of our young ladies, is the second step in the formation of this evil habit.

The third step is, that our young misses are not accustomed, gradually, and as they are

able, to the labors of the household. They are taught to look to domestics for the performance of a thousand little duties, which they are able to perform for themselves, and which it would be much better for them to perform for themselves. I am aware that the excuse often is, they are now at school, when they have completed their education, as it is technically called, then they can attend to this. But I am myself fully satisfied, that if put to household duties early, according to their strength, and accustomed, even while at school, to the faithful performance of a portion of these duties, their health would be improved, their mental vigor increased, and their education itself rendered more solid and valuable. And my opinion is formed from facts, that have fallen under my own observation. I have observed, almost universally, that those manifested more mental vigor, and were less superficial, and more thorough scholars, who were compelled to spend some portion of every day, in the faithful discharge of household duties. But I am looking at this, you will remember, in a moral point of view, and

in reference to future character, and here, I am satisfied, that the course pursued is most deleterious. They are accustomed to be waited upon by others, while they themselves are thinking only of their own pleasure. They thus form a habit, which it is difficult, in after life, to break through. And, you all know, that those labors to which the individual is early and constantly accustomed, are, in ordinary cases, performed with more ease and propriety, than when the attention is directed to them only in after life. Still further, this view of first acquiring an education, and then attending to those labors, gives rise to false notions. The term education, is supposed not to denote the gradual formation and development of character, by means of duties, as well as studies. It is supposed to denote a positive amount of knowledge and accomplishments, to be acquired for future use or display. And, when this idea is once fixed in the mind, the labors of the household fall under its influence. They are thought to be a part of education, the last branch perhaps, in regard to which, the ob-

ject is to acquire a positive amount of knowledge for future use or display. But to me it seems that God has established that holiest of all institutions, the family circle, for wise purposes. And one of these purposes, I believe to be, the right development and proper improvement of the characters of its various members, by enlisting the interest of each in the welfare of all, by subjecting all to mutual trials, and calling upon all for the discharge of reciprocal duties. I believe that, where the daughter cherishes an interest for the welfare of the family, feels a responsibility in regard to it, and makes sacrifices of self indulgences, and puts forth vigorous efforts in household labors and duties, the heart and the mind and the character will be improved. But when the daughter is only a boarder in her father's house, feeling no responsibility in regard to the household affairs, and consequently, taking no deep interest in them, performing, regularly and systematically, no part of the labors, she loses the benefit which God has designed for her in this holy relation. She might as well be a boarder in some

public house, there to be waited upon by others, there to live in idleness, or in those merely frivolous employments, which require no effort and call for no self-sacrifices. I have often been surprised to witness the different effects upon the heart and the character, resulting from the different courses I have alluded to. If you learn the characters of young ladies, who have been merely boarders in their father's houses, feeling no responsibility, taking no interest, performing no labors, making no sacrifices, you will be surprised to find how vain, frivolous and selfish, they are. They seem not to have acquired the power of reflection. They seem to be utterly indifferent to each other's happiness. But, on the contrary, if you become acquainted with the characters of young ladies, who have struggled with the other members of their families, making sacrifices, performing labors, and thus cherishing feelings of interest and responsibility, you will be surprised to find how much their powers of thought and reflection have been strengthened and developed, and how pure and ardent and self-sac-

rificing are their affections for those, for whom they have made sacrifices, and with whom they have labored and struggled.

You will perceive, from these remarks, that I would have every young lady, while under her father's roof, and before being called to other and different scenes and duties, regard the household labors of the family as a part of her appropriate and continued duty, not merely as a branch of education, to be attended to for a season and then neglected, but as her regular appropriate duties, assigned by God, in the very constitution of the family circle, as the best means to develop and form female character. In this view, they will not be neglected during the years devoted to books, and while acquiring the knowledge, which is to prepare the mind for future self-improvement. But, as this plan, of leaving all attention to these, until school education is completed, is so specious, it may be well to ask how it is in fact. Suppose, then, that the young lady has neglected these, while attending school. And now she returns from school, with a confirmed habit of neglect, and

an acquired reluctance of feelings, in regard to all this class of duties. She has formed the habit, it may be, of seeking only her own pleasure, instead of living for duty. Will not these habits and this reluctance, do much to prevent her engaging heartily and with interest in these labors? But, still further, she has now, among her school mates, a large circle of acquaintances. And to keep up these acquaintances, there must be a continual round of morning calls and afternoon visits and evening parties, to take up the time and attention. And, it may be, that the young lady has a circle of acquaintances among the young gentlemen, for whose calls she must ever be in full dress, as it would be highly improper to have them suppose that she employed herself in hard and useful labor at times, and dressed according to her occupation. Taking these circumstances into account, I ask, if there is any probability that there will be a hearty interest taken in household labors, and a hearty devotion to them, as the appointed and appropriate duties of life? I cannot believe there is. This, then, is the

last step, I can, at this time, notice, in the formation of the evil habit, of which I have been speaking. And, you learn from what I have said, what I mean by living for pleasure rather than for duty. I do not confine my remarks to those, who live in the extreme of folly and fashion. No; I would extend them to all who are seeking for pleasure instead of asking what is duty.

And now I will point out the effect of this habit. And first, it is the source of great unhappiness, frivolity and extravagance. It is the source of great unhappiness. God has created us for duty, for virtue, and not for mere enjoyment. He has indeed attached happiness to the performance of duty. But the question, which he would have us ask in regard to any course of conduct, is simply the question, 'Is it duty?' When we have once satisfied ourselves that any course of conduct is our duty, he would have us to press resolutely forward in its performance. Are there obstacles to overcome? He would have us, not shrink before them, but call forth stronger resolutions and put forth more vigorous efforts.

Is the course unpleasant? Still it is duty, and he would have us press forward, regardless of its unpleasant circumstances, with the feeling that, all we have to do is, to ascertain and perform duty, without once asking whether the course before us be pleasant or not.— And he has so constituted us, that the inward satisfaction of having performed even unpleasant duties, will give peace and happiness. But if, on the contrary, we ask only what will be pleasant, and seek, in our various courses, only for enjoyment, we shall find ourselves disappointed in our expectations, while the thought of having neglected duty in our search for pleasure, will give to our disappointment tenfold poignancy. This living for pleasure rather than for duty is the source of great unhappiness. It is the source of frivolity and extravagance. What is it, I ask, but this, that leads young ladies to the novel, to a blind subserviency to fashion, to seek for display in dress and furniture? Is it not, that they are seeking for pleasure from these? And, as they have left the path pointed out by God, is it strange that they should fall into a thous-

and vain and extravagant notions? Certainly not. This living for pleasure rather than for duty is the source of unhappiness, of frivolity and of extravagance. Nay more, it opens a wide door to temptation and sin. If you will look over the dark catalogue of female depravity, and will question the individuals there named as to the course they have pursued and the cause of their ruin, they must answer, if they answer truly, that they early formed the habit of living for pleasure, that they soon become vain and frivolous in mind, weak in principle and extravagant in their desires. And that to gratify their vanity, their love of finery and display, they yielded to the temptations, which assailed them, and fell the victims of sin and of moral ruin. Such, in nine cases out of ten must be the answer.

But again, this habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty utterly unfits our young ladies for all the exigencies and emergencies of future life. Suppose your parents are now wealthy. Are there not constantly recurring events, in this land, of a character to teach the uncertainty of wealth, the frequency of

change? How often do we see those who are on the very pinnacle of wealth, one day, hurled, on the next, to the deepest poverty! And most surely, with so many constantly recurring instances around you, you cannot feel safe, you cannot feel that the riches of your parents are certain. Suppose then, that a change should come over the circumstances of your parents, what would be your condition. With no means, art or power, for your self-support, with no mental vigor or strength of moral principle, with an extravagant love of finery and show and parade, a slavish subserviency to the opinions of others and the whims of fashion, having been accustomed to seek for pleasure rather than to live for duty, would you not be most wretched, and would not the sight of your wretchedness add tenfold to the anguish of the father and mother, who, in mistaken kindness, have made you a pet and trained you to vanity and extravagance.

Again, suppose you are left to wend your way through the world alone, either with or without property. Will not this habit render you wretched in yourself, and the cause of

unhappiness to all around you? Seeking only for pleasure, you are continually disappointed and continually unhappy. Having been accustomed to the services and attentions of others, you will be continually vexed at their indifference to your wishes. You will soon become a burden, and all the service and attention you can command, will be, not the service of friendship, rendered cheerfully and affectionately, but the mere mercenary attentions of the hireling, rendered in cold indifference, and only for pay. Not having been accustomed to seek out ways of making yourself useful to all around you, your society will be avoided, or, at best, only endured. Your friendship will be dreaded. Not being accustomed to depend upon yourselves, you will be compelled to feel that you must depend upon those, who have no affectionate regard for you, while you live, and who, you are satisfied, will rejoice when you are dead.

But, still further: suppose that, in the providence of God, you assume the relation of wife. How will you be prepared for the solemn responsibilities, and important duties,

and peculiar trials of that relation? You have formed the habit of living only for pleasure, and not for duty. You have accustomed yourself to a round of frivolity, vanity and fashion. You have become utterly dependent upon the services of others, for the most common attentions of life; you have not accustomed yourselves to the duties of the household, and have acquired a reluctance for its labors. If you enter the marriage relation with these habits and these feelings, you must either begin at once entirely anew, breaking up all your old habits and feelings and associations, and commencing the formation of habits and the cultivation of feelings of an entirely different character, based on different principles, and aiming at different objects. You must do this, I say, or you will be utterly wretched in yourself and the source of wretchedness in your husband. He will soon learn that he has not found a companion, that he has obtained only a toy, an expensive toy too, for it must be gaily dressed, and carefully served by two or three hired domestics. Is he in doubt? He cannot ask counsel, for you

have not been accustomed to think and reflect and cannot therefore give counsel. Is he in trouble? He dreads to communicate his difficulties to the wife of his bosom, lest, instead of summoning up energy and coming [to his relief, by your retrenchment and reform, you will be only like a spoiled child, rendered disconsolate at the loss of your accustomed indulgences. You see then, my young friends, that this habit is not only the source of unhappiness, frivolity and vanity, but that it tends to destroy all energy and nerve of character, and utterly unfit you for the stations, duties and emergencies of future life.

Still further, this habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty, exerts a preventive, or a deleterious influence upon religious improvement and christian character. The habit, you will bear it in mind, is that of seeking for pleasure. Does a young lady attend the house of worship, under the influence of this habit? You might, almost as well, hope to make an impression, by speaking to the winds, as addressing her. And why? Because let her be as deeply interested as she may, it is

only her own pleasure, which she seeks, her own enjoyment of which she speaks. Could you, with the power of Almighty truth, and the eloquence of angelic tongues, speak so as to move the very stones about you, still she is the same, seeking only pleasure, and speaking only of her enjoyment of the powerful thrill sent through her frame. Nay, more, seeking only pleasure, she has no reverence for the place, the services, or the being worshiped. And even in the most solemn parts of the service, if an amusing sight presents itself, or an amusing thought is suggested, you see her at once indulging in laughter, speaking to others and disturbing many. What hope is there from the most earnest, faithful and serious discourse, addressed to such a one? Thank God there is hope, but not in the power of man, it is only in the influences of God's spirit, I say then, that this habit exerts a preventive influence upon religious improvement.

But suppose one, who is under the influence of this habit, becomes interested in religion, this same feeling of selfishly seeking pleasure, pervades her religious character. Is

any outward effort to be made, or any noble project started? You will find her all zeal and ardor. But, when difficulties arise, when obstacles oppose, then this zeal and ardor evaporate. Is there any religious exercise, in which she feels deeply interested, and from which she hopes for much pleasure, she will make every effort to attend. But is she disappointed, she is rendered uncomfortable and unhappy, shewing, that still, though under the form of religious exercises, she is selfishly seeking her own enjoyment, that she is still living for pleasure, not for duty: that her interest in religious exercises, is only a love for self gratification, that she has not learned the very first principle in practical godliness, which is an unreserved and self-sacrificing devotion to duty, to the will of God. Thus you perceive that this habit exerts a powerfully deleterious influence upon the christian character, generating self-deception, preventing or crippling christian efforts, and quenching the influences of God's spirit.

I have thus, my young friends pointed out a prevailing habit, which as I sincerely be-

lieve, stands in the way of your social, intellectual and moral improvement, a habit, which as I have said, must be broken through, before we can hope that you will be prepared for future happiness, for future duties, or for christian improvement; the habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty. I have endeavored to prove the existence of this habit, to point out its origin, and to describe its evil effects.

It remains only, that in a few closing remarks I suggest the remedies. Are there those among the readers of these pages, who belong to the wealthier circles of society, to them I would say, great responsibility, upon this subject, rests with you. It is for you to set the example of living for duty rather than for pleasure. It has been with those of your circle, that this evil of regarding the performance of ordinary labor and the conscientious devotion to every day duties as ungentleel and vulgar. Indeed it is with some of your circle that the evil has commenced, if we go still further back, in establishing gentility and not duty as the standard. And say, my

friends, shall not the remedy of the evil commence with you? God grant that it may.

Are there those among the readers of these pages, who belong to the middling classes in society, or those who are in more indigent circumstances, to them I would appeal, I would exhort them to act in independence of the foolish notions which may prevail around them. Dare to despise that which is of no worth. Dare to appear as you are, and to serve your God by a right performance of the duties of your situations, unmoved by the sneers or the practices of others. Dwell in thought upon your relation to God, and you will be strengthened to withstand the sneers of men, especially when you consider that these sneers come only from the light minded and frivolous, whose respect is not worth possessing.

Are there those among the readers of these pages, who sustain the solemn and responsible relation of mothers. To them I would appeal. Look, my friends upon those, your fair daughters. God committed them to your trust and training. In that trust you are accountable. The results of that training must

be exhibited before God. He committed them to your reasonable, social immortal beings. And now, I say, will you return them to him, with feelings made selfish, with minds rendered powerless, and with hearts filled with frivolity and vanity, with desires confined to parade and dress and fashion, shall such be the character of these precious trusts, as you return them to him, who gave them? Oh, no; God forbid. I call upon you, then, to exert all the energies of your souls, to turn the attention of female mind away from the never ending search for pleasure, and to direct it to an unreserved, self-sacrificing devotion to duty. The evil begins while your daughters are under your dictation and influence. To you then, I appeal in their behalf. Oh, sacrifice not, I beseech you, on the altars of vanity and fashion, those immortal spirits committed to your trust. Consider that it is your highest duty, and that it will be your highest honor, that you have trained them up to live for duty, and consequently for happiness and for heaven.

But, young ladies, the greatest responsibility, after all, rests upon yourselves. For, whatever may be the opinions and the practices around you, and whatever may have been your early training, when you are capable of reflection, you are called upon to act for yourselves, upon your own responsibility, and with the thought that you are yourselves, to bear the consequences of your conduct.—To you then young ladies, I appeal. And shall I appeal to you in vain, when I appeal in behalf of yourselves, and of your highest happiness and greatest improvement. It cannot be. Consider then, I beseech you, the high powers which are bestowed upon you, the elevation and usefulness of which you are capable, and say, shall all this be forfeited in your silly chase for pleasure? Consider that you have immortal spirits, committed to you, that you may train and fit them for heavenly joys. Consider what God and Christ has done for you. And shall all this have been done in vain? Oh, no. Is there one young lady who may read these pages, who, as she looks onward to the emergencies of future

years, to future character, and still further onward to the spiritual world, is there a young lady, I would ask, who will not, as these thoughts are suggested, resolve that she will no longer live for pleasure, but for duty.

LETTER IV.

INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

Reasons for introducing the subject—first, wrong notions upon the subject of education prevalent—second but few perceive the connection there is between intellectual education and moral and spiritual improvement—Wrong notions—Education supposed to denote not the development of mind but the acquisition of a positive amount of knowledge—Education means to draw the powers out into active exercise—the studies of school to be regarded as means—the mental strength and development secured the object aimed at—This object secured by the actual exercise of the mind—without much regard to the objects about which it is exercised; Those who enjoy advantages should remember that their being well educated depends not so much upon the advantages enjoyed, as upon the manner in which they are improved, those not favored with advantages may, by the right exercise of their minds upon their duties and trials, secure the result aimed at in the pursuit of studies—mental development and strength—Intellectual development has a most important connection with moral and spiritual improvement—This proved and illustrated—All education is for eternity—What are usually regarded as results are, in this view, to be regarded as means of further advancement and progress—This thought calculated to exert a powerful influence upon the feelings and the efforts.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:

I have, already, as you will remember, urged upon you the claims of christianity to your affections, to that faith which is of the heart, and which is, consequently, a faith unto righteousness, and unto salvation. And then I have urged upon you the importance of adding to your faith virtue, the importance of commencing, under the influence and the guidance of religion, a course of moral and religious self-cultivation. I have also endeavored to remove the obstacles in the way of your progress, by cautioning you against the danger to which you are all exposed, of forming the habit of living for pleasure rather than for duty. The way is now open for urging upon you the importance of adding to your virtue, knowledge, of connecting with your efforts for moral and religious self-cultivation, corresponding efforts for intellectual improvement. I am about to address you therefore, my young friends, upon the subject of intellectual improvement. It is a subject upon which I conceive it to be of the utmost importance to speak in this connection, and that

for two reasons. In the first place, there are prevalent among young ladies, many wrong notions upon the subject of education, notions too, which prevail, perhaps, to as great an extent among those who are conscientiously seeking for moral and religious improvement, as among others. And in the second place, but few have so reflected upon the subject as to perceive the connection there is between intellectual cultivation and moral improvement and the importance of both intellectual and moral cultivation as aids to spiritual progress.

And first, I have said there are wrong notions prevalent upon the subject of education. We often hear it said of a young lady, that she has completed her education. Does not this expression imply that education is regarded as the acquisition of a certain amount, a positive and definite amount of knowledge and accomplishments? A young lady has completed her education! And why? Because she has acquired the amount of knowledge usually acquired by young ladies of her standing, and is as accomplished as others of her age and station; or because she has acquired

as much knowledge, attended to the study of as many different branches, as would be convenient in her circumstances and with her time. Therefore her education is to her completed. I am confirmed in the opinion that such are the ideas attached to the term education, from another expression we often hear. We often hear it said that such a young lady has acquired a good education, and that the education of another lady is defective. And why so? Because the one has acquired a greater amount of knowledge, has attended to more branches of study and is familiar with a greater number of what are commonly regarded as accomplishments, than the other. And does not this mode of speaking imply, that the term education is regarded as denoting a definite and positive amount, either greater or less, of knowledge? This, it seems to me, is a wrong notion, but what, you will ask, are we to understand by the term education? In answer, I would say, that the original word from which the term education is derived, means to lead forth or draw out. The term education then, properly means the

drawing out of the various capacities of our nature into full and free exercise. And it is applied more especially to the various studies and exercises of childhood, because these are regarded as the instruments of drawing forth and exercising the various powers of body and mind, and thus developing and strengthening them. You have often heard the importance of physical education spoken of. Some years ago gymnastics were recommended to young gentlemen, and calisthenics to young ladies as useful means of physical education. But why so? Not because it was of any great practical importance, to know how to perform the various movements and exercises, to which the attention was directed, or even to be skilled in their performance. But because these exercises were thought to be instrumental in drawing forth the bodily strength, in exercising the bodily powers, in developing and strengthening the bodily system. I point out this distinction, between bodily exercise as the means and bodily health and strength, as the end to be obtained, in order to guard against a mistake;

into which men fall in regard to this, as in regard to almost every other subject, the mistake of regarding means as the essential thing, to the neglect of the end to be obtained by the use of these means.

There were some, for example, who would conclude at once, that the lady who had neglected calisthenics, or the prescribed walks and rides attended to by others, had entirely neglected all physical education. And yet it may be true, that a young lady, by a diligent and faithful performance of household duties, has actually been pursuing a most profitable course of physical education, and has actually acquired, by these labors, bodily health and strength.

So in regard to intellectual education. The various studies, to which the attention is directed, are regarded as the means of education, because they are supposed to aid in drawing out the intellectual powers into free and full exercise, and so developing and strengthening them. You will notice here that the various studies of childhood are the means to be employed, intellectual strength

and development are the objects to be attained. It is frequently the case, that you see a person, who has enjoyed but few opportunities for an acquaintance with books and with the studies of childhood. And such a one is often spoken of as a person of little or no education. And yet, if you look at the intellectual character, you will find that the mental powers are in full and free exercise, and have acquired great strength and development. The result, aimed at in all studies, has actually been obtained, although the mode of obtaining it has been different from that usually prescribed. And how, it is asked, is this? I answer, the result is, in all cases, obtained by the exercise of the mind. It does not depend upon the particular subject, about which the mind is exercised. For example, one young lady is a pupil in a high school, and her attention is directed to the study of Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Mathematics, and, it may be, to ancient and modern languages. But why is her attention directed to these? One reason is, that the knowledge acquired by these studies is itself important. The

knowledge of Grammar and Rhetoric will enable her to understand more fully, and to appreciate more justly the beauties of what she may afterwards read. And so all the various branches are valuable in reference to future improvement. But, still, the principal reason is, that, while engaged in these studies, she is exercising, strengthening and developing the mental powers. In the pursuit of these studies, the judgment is exercised, discrimination, nice and careful discrimination is called for—the individual is accustomed to think, to weigh, to examine, to judge. And then, too, the taste is refined and purified; in this way valuable results are secured. But another young lady is deprived of these high privileges and cannot attend to these important studies. She is comparatively in indigent circumstances. She is called upon to plan and contrive, in order to make a little go as far as it can, to make the best appearance which can be made with limited means, to exercise her own taste in regard to her dress. The consequence is, that she thinks, examines, weighs, judges; her discrimination, her

forethought are called into exercise. Her sense of propriety, her tastes are exercised. She is accustomed to self-reliance, to put forth and to depend upon her own individual energy. In this way, it often happens, that the most valuable results are obtained, the essential object, a well developed and well balanced mind, is secured, although she has not been permitted to attend to the various branches of school study. Nay, more, I have often noticed, that some ladies, who have not enjoyed the advantages of a school and a book education, have, in the duties and actual emergencies of after life, manifested a more appropriate developement of mind, a greater strength of judgement, and discrimination, and self-reliance, and self-guidance than many others, who have enjoyed the best advantages, and pursued the greatest number of studies. And why so? Because their minds had been exercised in early life upon its trials and duties in precisely the same way in which they were called to exert themselves in after life. But those with whom they have been compared, although they have attended to many studies,

have not attended to them in the most profitable manner, they have relied too much upon authority and exercised their own discrimination and self-reliance too little. Thus, you perceive that in its true and proper sense education means the drawing out into free and full exercise, the developing in a proper degree, and in just proportions the various powers and capacities of our natures, and that if this be actually done, it is not essential by what studies and exercises it be accomplished, whether by the studies of school or by the various trials and duties and efforts of actual life.

But why, you may ask, do I say all this?—Am I decrying an education at school and by means of books? By no means. I have made the remarks, which I have thus far offered, for two reasons. First, while I would have every young lady avail herself of all the advantages which may be within her reach, in the way of schools and books, I would have her understand that her improvement does not depend solely upon these books and schools and teachers, but upon the manner

in which she exercises her own mind in regard to them. A young lady may have the advantage of the best schools in the land, and may pass over a great variety of the most valuable and important studies, and yet be but poorly *educated* at last. Because she may depend too much upon authority, may take things upon trust, and exercise only her memory. She may not think for herself, or form habits of reflection. She may not discriminate nicely and judge carefully. Thus, you perceive, that such a one may not only pass over a great variety of important studies, but so far as mere recitations and examinations are concerned, she may be distinguished—may, by her parrot-like rehearsal from memory and by rote, actually excel, and yet be at last but *poorly educated*. My first reason for the remarks, which I have offered, I repeat, is to impress upon the minds of those young ladies who are now favored with high privileges, the importance of a right manner of improving them. It depends, young ladies, on yourselves and not on the reputation of the school you may attend, on the manner in which you

pursue your studies, rather than on the particular studies themselves which you may pursue, whether you shall be well educated or not. Do you study English Grammar? You should remember that this is only a key to unlock all the philosophy of language, and, that the philosophy of language is only an outward manifestation of the philosophy of mind. If then you study English Grammar, as it should be studied, and look from the technical forms of Grammar into all the peculiarities of language, and from these into the various operations of the mind, which are thus manifested, you will be studying in reality the philosophy of the human mind. You will be taught, as you do this, to turn your thoughts inward and watch the operations of your own minds, as indicated by the language you use, and to exercise the habit of observation in regard to the mental processes of others as you listen to their conversation.

In this mode of studying English Grammar, you perceive you will be exercising and developing your own mind. But there is a different way of pursuing this study. I have

seen those, who professed to be skilled in this department, and who yet never appeared to have thought of the philosophy of either language or mind. They look upon the rules of Grammar, not as the simple expression of the principles involved in the very philosophy of mind and of language, but as the arbitrary creations of man; and the application of these principles they regarded as the clipping and paring down and shaping of language to a correspondence with these arbitrary creations. I have alluded to a single and a common branch of study to illustrate my position.— And here again I would ask you, my young friends, to remember, and to practice upon the remembrance, that it depends upon yourselves and not on others, on the manner in which you pursue your studies, rather than on the studies pursued—whether your school education shall be to you valuable or not.— And this, I repeat, is the first reason for the remarks which I have offered. My second reason is, to encourage those who are not favored with opportunities for long attendance at school. I am aware, my young friends,

that there are many such in the community. Young ladies of fine minds, of ardent desires, and these desires directed to intellectual improvement, but who are compelled, from circumstances, to neglect schools and books.—Such, in the despair of their souls, are ready to give up all efforts at self-improvement. To all such I would speak a word of encouragement. Remember, young ladies, that the results and not the means of education are the essential things, that the great and most important question to be asked, has regard to the actual development of the mind, and not so much to the particular branches of study employed in this development. Are you called to the continual and careful exercise of your mind for your own support, in the various adjustment of efforts to ends, in all the nicer minutiae of household duties? Sustain yourselves by the thought, that the mental exercise, called forth by these particular duties and trials, is an important and valuable process of education, that, if, in all cases you endeavor to discriminate nicely, and to examine carefully, and to judge properly, you are

exercising and developing your mind in a profitable and proper manner. And, to take the illustration already employed, the study of English Grammar—suppose you have had no time nor opportunity to attend to its technicalities, yet, by reflecting upon what you read, comparing one passage with another, by watching the peculiarities and beauties of style, and of thought, you may become most intimately acquainted with the philosophy of language and of thought. You may have your thoughts turned in upon your own mental operations, and the results, obtained by the study of English Grammar, may be yours.—You have reached them, it is true, by a different process, and may not be able to express yourself, in regard to them, in technical language. Yet the results, the knowledge of the philosophy of language and of mind, the exercise and development of your own mental powers, may be yours. Let no young lady then, be discouraged because she cannot pursue the same courses of study with many of her mates. She has a mind, the improvement of which, although it may be advanced,

yet does not wholly depend upon a particular course of studies. That mind she carries with her wherever she goes, and she can exercise it upon whatever may present itself to her notice. And by so exercising her mind, she can strengthen, develope and train it up for usefulness and happiness. Be not then, I repeat, discouraged. Avail yourselves of the privileges that may be within your reach, improve carefully the opportunities with which you may be favored, and ever employ your minds upon the various subjects presented, whether they be studies, duties, or trials, with much care, and an earnest desire for improvement. In this way, although circumstances may seem adverse, you will be daily improving in those things which are the objects of education. But I hasten to my next topic.

To me it seems that intellectual development has a most intimate and important connection with moral and spiritual progress. This connection I will now endeavor to point out. And what is moral improvement, on what is it based, and how is it promoted? Moral improvement is improvement in the right

understanding of moral duties, in the due appreciations of the motives which may move us to the right performance of these duties, and in such an entire devotion to them, as will result in the skilful performance of them. But on what are moral duties based? Do they not grow out of the natures we have received at the hands of God and of the relations which we sustain to our fellow men? On what, for example, is the duty to be temperate in all things based? The duty of governing and restraining our appetites and passions? Do not these duties grow out of the circumstance that we are created moral and spiritual beings? Experience and observation prove that indulgence in the appetites, not only benumbs our intellectual powers, but blunts and deadens our moral sensibilities. Such indulgence, then, is wrong, is sinful. For it is wrong to unfit ourselves by the indulgence of our appetites, for the high moral efforts and moral purposes for which we were created. Again, experience and observation prove that the indulgence of our appetites, deadens our spiritual capacities and affections. Can

you, I ask, go at once from a surfeiting feast, to your closet of prayer, with any well grounded hope that you will be enabled to engage in that exercise with true fervor and heartfelt devotion. Most surely not. God has created us with animal appetites. These are given us as the means of guiding us to those things which will promote the health of our bodies. He has created us with intellectual capacities, these were given us that we may study out and understand our natures, our relations, the works and ways, the character and purposes of God. He has created us with social affections. These were given us that we may enjoy and impart both happiness and improvement in our intercourse with friends. He has created us with moral sensibilities. These were given us to guide us into the path, and to urge us on to the faithful performance of duties. He has created us with spiritual capacities. These were given us that we may hold communion with the father of our spirits. In the perfect character these are all developed in their due and proper proportions, and preserve towards each

other their proper relations—and consequently the improvement of each tends to the more appropriate and rapid improvement of all the others. The animal appetites, if rightly and properly indulged, promote health of body, and thereby strengthen us for greater social enjoyment, and for higher intellectual efforts. The social enjoyments and intellectual efforts, when indulged in and put forth in a proper degree, being under the guidance of moral principles and susceptibilities, afford to these appropriate exercise, and consequently serve to develope and strengthen them. And where the tenderness of moral susceptibilities is cultivated, and the strength of moral principles is increased, and purity of moral character is secured, there the spiritual and devout and holy affections rise up into a more close and intimate communion with the Father of spirits. You perceive, therefore, that where the appetites are indulged to excess, the individual is unfitted for the higher and holier exercises of his spiritual nature. The young lady who employs her intellectual powers upon vain and frivolous pursuits, unfits her-

self for the higher enjoyment of spiritual communion with God. Where social enjoyment, or mere intellectual improvement, are made the great objects of life, moral improvement and spiritual progress will be retarded. But how are these principles of human nature and their mutual relation known? Is it not by a process of intellectual improvement? Most surely it is! And now what is the effect of this intellectual improvement? Here is a devout and conscientious, but exceedingly ignorant christian. She may be faithful in the discharge of duty, because she fears, with slavish dread, that positive punishment may be inflicted. Suppose her to be enlightened by a process of intellectual education. Suppose her to understand the constitution of the human soul, and to see clearly in what way the faithful performance of duty promotes spiritual improvement, and that misery is not an arbitrary infliction of an angry sovereign, but the result of a wise and merciful adjustment of the constitution of our natures. Will she not see, in all, the work of infinite love, and seeing this, will not her obedience be more

free from restraint, from slavish dread? Will she not be now drawn to the faithful performance of duty, by the cords of love? And is not this a more powerful, as well as a more pleasant motive, than slavish fear? Thus you perceive, that the simple branch of school studies, English Grammar, leading, as it does, if pursued aright, to a knowledge of the philosophy of mind, and leading, still further, as, by reflection and personal examination it may do, to a knowledge of the operations of your own mind, may be instrumental in producing a greater reverence for your own spiritual capacities, a better understanding of the grounds of personal duty, and in presenting new and more powerful motives to faithfulness and obedience, may thus be instrumental in promoting your moral improvement and your spiritual progress.

Take another class of duties, belonging to the same connection, the duties of love and charity to others, and especially to those, who may differ from you in religious opinions.—The ignorant christian, who is conscientiously obedient to her Master's instructions, will

undoubtedly strive, and that most strenuously, to perform these duties. But they will be performed out of regard to what is considered a positive and an arbitrary command. But if the same person should make valuable intellectual acquirements, she will see the reasonableness of this commanded duty. She will understand how it is, that from the differences in the construction of different minds, from early education and prejudice, from viewing the same subject, as many are compelled to view it, from different directions minds equally desirous of understanding and obeying the truth, equally honest, sincere and devout, in all their inquiries, may, and often do, arrive at different conclusions. Still further, she will find some who have embraced what she regards the true views of christian duty, holding this truth in unrighteousness. And she will find that many, whose views of christian truth are apparently extremely defective, are led by what little of truth they do embrace, to maintain pure and holy lives. Now, with this knowledge, will she not perceive the reasonableness of the duty? Will

not her motives be much stronger than before? Thus you perceive that those branches of knowledge, which relate to the nature, operations and philosophy of the human mind, may be instrumental of moral improvement and spiritual progress.

And now turn your thoughts to natural science. Suppose two young ladies walk out, and as they walk, their attention is directed to the glorious luminary of day, or to the fair queen of night, with her starry hosts. The one is ignorant. She only gazes upon these wonderful objects with a wild stare of amazement—with feelings of superstitious dread, or in utter indifference, as at something common, every day occurrence, and not worthy of particular attention. The other young lady has acquired some good degree of acquaintance with the science of astronomy, and to her, every change in the appearance of the sun or moon, every twinkling star, is instinct with life, light and intelligence. She looks upon them all as the handy works of God, and she understands something of the wonderful manifestation there is in them, of

wisdom, power and goodness. It has been said by the Royal Psalmist of Israel, that 'the heavens declare the glory of God.' To which mind, I ask, to the ignorant or to the instructed mind, do these works most fully declare this glory? Can there be any doubt? While the ignorant young lady is staring in amazement, or turning away in indifference, the mind that is instructed, is filled with the thoughts of God, her affections are carried up to the former, and sustainer and governor of all worlds, and she is ready, under the prompting impulses of her own devout feelings, to exclaim with the poet, 'An undevout astronomer is mad.'

Again, suppose our heavens to be spanned, as they sometimes have been, by the beautiful arches, or the earth bathed in the beautiful hues of the Aurora Borealis, with what widely different feelings are these phenomena viewed by the ignorant and the instructed. The ignorant gaze with mute indifference or superstitious dread. To minds uninstructed, these things may appear only as indications of divine wrath and portentous omens of future

calamity. But the mind that is instructed, sees in these same phenomena, only a beautiful and heart stirring testimony of divine love. Instead of shrinking away in superstitious dread, the heart leaps for joy—goes forth to meet in holy meditation the God in whose hands are the lightnings of heaven, who rideth upon the whirlwind and governeth the storms. But, if the science of astronomy thus gives to the mind instructed in its truths, such clear, forcible and vivid views of God, as the ruler of all worlds, and calls forth lively feelings of gratitude—it must, of course, promote moral improvement and spiritual progress. For our strongest motives to the performance of moral duties are those, which are based upon love and gratitude to God. It must promote spiritual progress, for it calls into lively and active exercise the very feeling which constitute a part of our spiritual exercises. And the same may be said of all the natural sciences. To her who is acquainted with entomology, or the history, characters and habits of insects—every fly that buzzes, every insect that crawls, every spider that

spins its web, is an object of deep interest, an object of careful observation, an object which conveys to the mind much instruction. To her who is acquainted with the science of botany, every flower she may rear, every plant she may tend, nay more, every worthless weed, as it is called by others, is an object of deep interest, and of heavenly instruction. Those beautiful plants, which in summer adorn your yards, and in winter your parlors, may not only contribute to the gratification, of a pure and healthy taste, they may even become living mementos for God, living ministers of good, ever presenting to you new and more beautiful proofs and manifestations of God's continued presence, agency and goodness. Thus you perceive that knowledge may promote moral improvement and spiritual progress. I do not say that knowledge, simply in itself considered, will necessarily or naturally do this. What I say, is that when viewed through a christian medium, it will do this. And you will remember, that I do not bring forward the cultivation of knowledge as a preliminary and commencing step,

but as what should be added to the essentials, faith and virtue, as what is to be cultivated as next in importance to giving the heart to God, and devoting the energies to moral and religious self cultivation. In this subordinate place, I do conceive that it may be instrumental in promoting our moral improvement and our spiritual progress. I do most sincerely and heartily believe that the more our knowledge is increased, the deeper and stronger and more influential will be our faith, our trust, our devotion, and the more unreserved, free and cheerful, will be our obedience.— And this for a very plain and obvious reason. The whole universe will furnish ministers to our religious improvement. Every insect that crawls, every bird that flies, every beast that moves, every fish that swims, every flower that blooms, every plant that grows, every pebble beneath our feet, the ocean that rolls, the wind that blows, the clouds that fly and drop their fatness as they pass, the sun, the moon, the stars that shine, all, all these come fraught with a message from God to the soul of man. But ignorance, on the other hand,

closes all these streams at once, and shuts out from the ear the still small but powerful voice of natural objects and mental truths.

I have thus, my friends, endeavored to correct some wrong impressions upon the subject of education, and to point out the connection between intellectual improvement and moral and spiritual progress. It remains that I direct your attention to one thought more, before I close, a thought, which might have been connected with my first position, but which I preferred to reserve for this separate consideration, that so I might give it, if possible, a more distinct representation, and cause it to make a deeper and more vivid impression. The thought is this, that all education is for eternity, and that consequently there is no limit to the period of acquiring an education on earth, but the limit of life. No one has completed her education until she has closed her life. This thought is highly important in one particular aspect. It shews that what are usually regarded even as the results of education, are to be looked upon only as the means and instruments of still fur-

ther advances either intellectual, or moral and spiritual. Are you, my young friend about to leave school with the thought that your education is completed? Let me show you your mistake, and, that, instead of being completed, it is but just commenced. What have you done at school? You have acquired a knowledge of language. And what is language, but the manifestation of thought?—Words without thoughts are unmeaning symbols. We value words because, by some strange property of the mind, we can, as we look upon the printed page, learn what were the thoughts that passed through another mind in past ages or in distant lands. Language then is the instrument, by which we are to make ourselves acquainted with the thoughts of those who lived before us and who are absent from us. But, in studying and understanding language at school, a young lady has only learned how to use the instrument. Suppose, for example, that a young lady has made herself acquainted with the French language at school. The great advantages of that acquisition are two. She has exercised her

mind in a peculiar way and acquired a peculiar mental habit, and then she has learned the use of a key, which may unlock to her the wealth of the whole French literature and science, the wealth of minds rich in thought and skilled in science. Now, here is what is usually regarded as one result of study. The result is that the young lady is acquainted with the French language. But this result, you perceive, is to be regarded only as the means of still farther advances, only as the means of an acquaintance with the wide range of French literature and science. But here you may say is the end of the process the ultimate and final result. By no means. Of what value is a knowledge of French literature? Is it not that, in that knowledge we find food for our own thoughts and inquiries? By our own thoughts, inquiries and reflections we find our minds strengthened and developed. We may correct, in our own conclusions, errors which we discover in theirs.—We may follow out trains of thought, suggested by them. We may advance beyond their farthest limits in our own discoveries, being aided by what we

have learned of their discoveries. In this way, you perceive that a knowledge of French science and literature, which by many would be regarded as a result, is in reality to be looked upon only as a means for further progress and higher advances. But, to carry this same branch still farther, how will the mental improvement, which we have been enabled to make by our knowledge of French literature, serve as a means, of still farther advancement? I answer that the individual, who has made this improvement, has learned much of the nature and operations of the human mind, and of the relations which are sustained towards the infinite and eternal spirit. Consequently, she can see more clearly the various reasons of the duties required, and can feel and understand the force of the obligations which are upon her. She has more comprehensive and influential views of God's wisdom and goodness. She sees and feels more deeply the affinity of spirit with spirit, the connection of the finite with the infinite. In this way, all her own mental actions and intellectual improvement may be the means

of higher moral advances and greater spiritual progress. But perhaps, you may say, young ladies, that you will never have opportunities for following out a particular branch of study to so great an extent. Perhaps not. Let us take then an illustration of a different character. Suppose you have enjoyed very few advantages for intellectual improvement, have been obliged to confine your attention to household duties or to direct it to some appropriate art for your support? Have you confined your attention to household duties and become skilled in their performance?—You have probably, in doing this, learned to regard these as *duties*, and have formed the habit of performing well all duties. Here then, in the very outset, you have acquired the means of further improvement. For, should your circumstances change as they undoubtedly would, and your ^{own} duties undergo a corresponding change, the habit which you have formed while about your household duties, will go with you through these changes and will be the means of your making great and rapid improvement from the various chan-

ges, in scenes and duties, through which you may pass. Still further, your correct and appropriate performance of household duties, gives you the power of conferring pleasure upon others and of contributing to their happiness and improvement. It may, therefore, be put forth as a manifestation of your own kindness of heart, and by exercising, may strengthen your own benevolent feelings and affections. In addition to this, there is in the discharge of even household duties, to one who strives to perform them in the best possible manner, a good and healthy exercise of the mind, of examination, forethought, reflection and judgement. Thus you see that knowledge and skill in regard to household duties, may be instrumental of intellectual, moral and spiritual advancement. And from these illustrations I trust that you will perceive that every branch and every step of education, while it may be regarded as the result of the steps which precede, should also be regarded as the means of reaching the steps which are before, and instrumental of still further and still higher advances, and still greater progress.

In this respect, the thought which I have last suggested, is truly important, that all education is for eternity; that no education is complete until this life is swallowed up of death. And I might with propriety add, that in the view of christian character and eternal happiness, there is a subordination in the different parts of education. The true christian will desire, and strive earnestly for intellectual improvement. But she will ever value intellectual improvement, not so much on its own account, as because it may be the means of moral improvement. She will strive strenuously for the improvement of her moral character. But it will be principally because she is satisfied that the more pure her moral character may become, the higher will her devout affections and spiritual aspirations rise; and the greater will be her religious progress.

Yes, my friends, the thought that all education is for eternity, is one of vast importance, and it gives to all the parts and branches and modes of pursuing education, a vast importance, an importance, which may be felt, but which cannot be described. You

have all read of the accession to the throne of England of Princess Victoria, and of the care with which her mother educated her, in view of her possible elevation to that rank. Now, would you not all feel, that the circumstance, that a young lady is to be placed in so important a station, gave to all the parts and branches and modes of pursuing her education a vast importance? Would you not feel that whatever others who were preparing only for the ordinary walks of life might do, it would be of the utmost importance for her to be educated in the most perfect manner possible? But what is the throne of England, with all its elevation, and splendor and influence, so far as the individual is concerned, compared with the eternal interests of an individual's own soul? Is it not, then, much more important that she, who is educating her soul for eternity, should endeavor to train it up in the most perfect manner? This, young ladies, is a view which may be brought home to your own cases. When you think only of the future duties of life, you may say in regard to any branch or any mode of pursuing

your education, this is of no great importance, it has reference only to the unimportant scenes and duties of ordinary life. With this feeling you will be in danger of neglecting your intellectual improvement, or of pursuing it in an improper and unprofitable manner. But when you consider that carelessness in the studies of intellectual education, may induce habits of carelessness in regard to moral character, and that carelessness in regard to moral character, may utterly prevent all spiritual improvement, and that the want of spiritual improvement will unfit for the enjoyment of heavenly happiness, then will you feel that it is of infinite importance to avoid this carelessness in the studies of intellectual education. Oh, then, dwell upon the thought which I have presented, that all education is for eternity. For, if you dwell upon this thought, you cannot, you will not waste the precious season with which you are favored. You will ever and in all circumstances of life, be seeking intellectual, moral and spiritual improvement. And are any of you, my friends, so circumstanced that the study of books must be

neglected? Consider I beseech you, that in every struggle with trial and difficulty and temptation, your intellectual power is increased, while at the same time and by the same effort, your moral principles are strengthened and your heavenward aspirations rendered more fervent. So if, in the face of opposition under temptation, or indeed in any circumstances you persevere in the performance of duty, you will find your mental powers, your moral sensibilities strengthened. You will be continually making perceptible progress and at each step you will gain strength for still further and more vigorous efforts. Thus your intellectual, moral and spiritual education will be continually making progress. They will go on hand in hand in mutual harmony, and with mutual benefit.

LETTER V.

INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

Recapitulation of the last letter—the importance of acquiring a taste for reading—Improvement by reading depends not so much upon the amount read as upon the manner of reading—Important to read slowly—with much thought and reflection, and self-application—Improvement in reading depends not so much upon the amount as upon the character of what is read—Five specific objections against novel reading—Works of imagination sometimes important to verify general conclusions, or to illustrate abstract truths—Reviews and other light reading of the kind should be taken up only occasionally—The principle reading should be of a solid character—The reading of the Bible urged—Some hints in regard to the manner of reading the sacred volume—Importance of the habit of observation—Suggestions on amusements and their influence upon intellectual and moral improvement—Conclusion.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:

In my last letter, I endeavored to point out what I conceived to be important princi-

ples upon the subject of intellectual improvement, and to shew the connection between intellectual development and moral and spiritual progress. The particular suggestions of my letter were these three. First, that the great object of education is to draw out, exercise and develope the various faculties of our nature, that books and studies are the means of accomplishing this object, but that, as the strength and development of the mental powers depend upon the actual exercise of the mind itself, rather than upon the particular studies and subjects about which the mind is exercised, it sometimes happens, that those who are deprived of books and of study, do, by a similar exercise of their minds upon the actual duties and trials of life, obtain the same or similar valuable results with others, and, consequently, that those young ladies who enjoy great advantages should remember, that the value of their education will depend upon their own faithfulness in the right exercise of their minds, rather than upon the high character of the advantages which they enjoy, while those, who are deprived of these priv-

ileges, may be encouraged to seek for the same results, in rightly meeting the trials and rightly discharging the duties of life. This I say, was the first suggestion.

My second was, that all knowledge, and all intellectual improvement, if looked upon in the light of Christianity, and applied under the influence of Christian principle, may become the instrument of moral improvement and spiritual progress, by making known to us the grounds of duty, and setting before us stronger motives for its performance. Such was my second suggestion.

My third was, that all education is education for eternity, and that, consequently, the intellectual development and the intellectual acquirements, which are usually regarded as the results of education, are to be regarded, in view of eternity, but as the means and instruments of still further progress in intellectual, moral and spiritual improvement, and that there is no limit on earth to the period of acquiring an education, but the close of life itself.

I propose, in this letter, to speak of the means of securing intellectual improvement,

and of some of the hindrances, which are to be encountered in the attempt. And I would first offer some remarks upon the subject of reading in its influence upon intellectual improvement. I feel that I ought to urge upon your attention the importance of *acquiring* a taste for useful reading, as one of the greatest safe-guards to your future character, one of the most fruitful sources of happiness and improvement. I have seen young ladies, who had been so accustomed to live upon outward excitement, that they were most miserably wretched, when left to themselves. They were in possession of no inward resources of happiness. They had been accustomed to look without for all their enjoyment, and consequently, all within was an empty void. In society they are perhaps the liveliest of the lively. All with them, at such times, is noisy mirth and boisterous merriment. They are not only full of life and animation themselves, but they breathe life and animation into all around them, they are the life of the whole circle where they are. Such they are, when placed amid outward circumstances calculated

to excite them. But when by themselves, when left alone, all this life and animation gives place to uneasiness, to murmuring and fretting, or settled gloom. They seem not to know that there may be happiness in quiet cheerfulness, that it is possible for one to find sources of happiness in her own reflections and meditation and reading. And, having secured no resources of happiness within themselves, they are ever wandering abroad in its pursuit. Gadding, calling, visiting, or receiving visits, any thing is welcomed as a relief from the tedium of mental vacuity. Such young ladies I have seen. And when I have seen them, I have felt the importance of securing resources of happiness within one's self. I would, then, urge the importance of acquiring a taste for useful reading with this view, as a resource of happiness within yourselves. If you acquire this taste for useful reading, you need not often be alone. Your companions of your own age, your ordinary associates may be far away. But still, you may have with you the writings of the distinguished of past ages. Sages and philosophers,

wise men and devout men, may thus be your companions, your associates in these solitary hours, as they are usually called. With their minds you may hold communion. You may listen to their communications and meditate upon their instructions. You need not be alone. You never need lack for resources of happiness within yourselves. Then, too, useful reading furnishes pure and profitable thoughts to the mind, and excites amiable, and pleasant, if not holy affections in the heart, and thus furnishes you with an ever ready source of enjoyment and improvement. A striking thought, for example, may be suggested, which will give rise to a long train of reflections, and thus, hours may be pleasantly and profitably spent in company with the good thoughts of others. So a pure emotion may be excited, which is connected with a long train of pure and holy affections, and thus time may be passed pleasantly and profitably, in communings of soul and heart, with the wise and pure of past ages, when you are prevented from enjoying the society of companions of your own. I would then urge upon every

young lady, who may read these pages, the importance of acquiring a taste for useful reading, as a resource of happiness, independent, in some degree, of outward associates. You cannot expect always to be placed amid outward excitement. There must be times, when you will be by yourselves, and when, if you have no resources of happiness within yourselves, you must be most miserably wretched. And then, too, if you could hope to live always amid outward excitement, it would lose its power over you. Should you be spared to old age, you must then be wretched. If then, my young friends, you would have resources of happiness within yourselves so as to be independent, in some degree, of outward circumstances—if you would lay up a fund upon which you may draw in seasons when you are left solitary—and especially when the period of old age, with all its decrepitude and helplessness, shall arrive—acquire, I beseech you, a taste for useful reading. I might say more upon the importance of this—but I hope to set forth that importance in a more discriminating manner, in the further

and more definite remarks I propose to offer, upon the most profitable modes of reading.

I would remark then, that the real improvement, to be derived from reading, does not depend so much upon the *amount* which you read, as upon the *manner* in which you read. There is a taste for reading and a habit of reading, which are of no great value either as the means of improvement or as a resource of happiness. A person may have acquired such a taste for reading as to devour greedily and rapidly every book that may fall in her way. And consequently she may be able to tell, at the close of the year, of the vast amount of her reading. She may be deeply interested while she reads, and may even remember, with a good degree of accuracy, what she has read. And yet, if this be all, she may derive no great profit from her reading. Its effect may be that of mere passive excitement, and the impression made, may be only upon the memory. Indeed, I have sometimes thought that improvement is as often prevented by reading too much, as by reading too little. It was once said, by a distinguished legal gen-

tleman, in giving hints to a student, that he had not himself read one tenth part as much law as an inferior lawyer to whom he referred, and that if he had read as much, he should in all probability have been no more distinguished than the gentleman to whom he alluded.— Whether the gentleman ever made the remark or not there is much of truth and sound wisdom in the remark itself. And why so?— Because, I answer, the profit derived from books, the real substantial profit, results, not from the act of reading, not from the pleasure with which we read, not even from the accuracy with which we remember what we have read, but from our own reflections upon the subjects and thoughts presented in reading. Let me illustrate. Here are two young ladies engaged in reading the memoirs of some one of distinguished worth, of their own sex.— This memoir, suppose it to be those Miss Hannah More, or of Mrs. Hemans, this memoir consists of a narration of the circumstances and events of her life, of the various changes in feeling and character through which she passed, and of the various scenes in which she

mingled, and of the various influences to which she was subjected. The simple narration, whether it be in the words of the compiler or in the correspondence of the lady herself, is interesting to both, perhaps to both alike. But one of these young ladies is satisfied with this interest, which has been excited—with the mere passive pleasure, which she has enjoyed. Or, if she goes farther than this, she is satisfied with being able to remember and relate what she has read. She reads rapidly and is soon ready to lay aside the book and pass with equal zest to another and a different one. The other reads slowly, she will wish to keep the book weeks instead of days. She is pleased as she reads, but then she wishes to pause, from time to time, and reflect upon what she reads. She makes the substance of her reading the subject of much and frequent thought after she has closed her book. She scans in her own mind the various parts of the character. She traces actions back to motives, and notices the manner, in which circumstances and motives peculiarly effect the subject of the memoir, in consequence of her

peculiar natural temperament, or early education, or acquired prejudices. She compares the character, of which she is reading, with others of which she has before read, or with those, with which she has been acquainted. And finally, she applies what she reads to herself, to her own circumstances, temperament and duties. As she has done this, she has taken up the book, and again and again turned to passages, to see if her recollection of them be accurate and her inferences from them just. She does all this, not by a regular process of daily devotion to reading for hours at a time, but, while about her ordinary household duties. It may be, that, after the morning labors, she finds a few moments to read, that, as she sits plying her needle of an afternoon, she occasionally turns to the book by her side to re-examine a passage, upon which she is thinking, or that, just before she retires she spends a few moments with her book. In this way, although she may read slowly, may seem to be making scarcely perceptible progress, and although her companion may have read many volumes during the time, yet she

has derived great profit from what she has read. And why so ? Because, I answer, she has made what she has read the subject of careful thought, long continued meditation, and deep reflection after she has closed the book. Thus, my friends, you perceive that the real, substantial profit to be derived from reading depends, not so much upon the amount of what you read, as upon the manner in which you read, in other words, it depends not so much upon reading many books, as it does upon your making the substance of what you read the subject of your thoughts after the book is closed. I have dwelt the more carefully upon this point, because I am addressing those, who in all probability, will not have time and opportunity for reading many books, and who are sometimes in danger on that account of neglecting to make the best possible improvement of the few books which they can read, and because I wished to give instruction adapted to your future circumstances. Situated as most of you probably will be, so that you cannot read much, with minds often distracted by household cares, and with bodies

fatigued by household labors, still, if you are faithful to yourselves, you can read a small portion each day, and by making the substance of what you read the subject of much thought and reflection, you may be every day securing much real and substantial profit from what little you do read.

I must here, however, guard against a mistake, into which my remarks may lead you.—The mistake is, that of reading a little in a great variety of books. You may under the influence of this mistake, read a little in one book, in the morning, a little in a different book in the afternoon, and a little in a third book in the evening. And these different books, it may be, will treat of entirely different subjects. If this be the course pursued, your reading will distract your thoughts, and you will be prevented from that long and close and serious reflection upon what you read, which will make your reading profitable. Suppose, for example, that you are reading either of the memoirs to which I have alluded, let it be the principal subject of your reading, and thought and reflection until you

have finished the book, and by reflection have inwardly digested what you have read, until you have, in your own minds, some clear and connected views of the character, in all its peculiarities and principles, until you have discovered some mode of applying the instruction you have gathered up, to the improvement of your own character. So, if you are reading a work upon morals, upon practical religion, or doctrinal theology, confine your attention and your thoughts principally to that for the time being. You may read but little each day, but by thinking and reflecting upon what you read, your reading will, from day to day, be connected, and by having well digested what you have read upon one day, you will be prepared for reading more profitably on the next. Thus much would I say in regard to the manner of reading and of making the most improvement of what you read.

I remark, in the second place, that the intellectual and moral improvement, to be derived from reading, depends, not so much upon the amount of your reading, as upon the character of what you read. And here I

would enter my most solemn protest against that most foolish and dangerous practice, into which young ladies often fall, the indiscriminate reading of novels. This class of books is so rapidly enlarged, and our circulating libraries are to so great an extent filled with them—for circulating libraries must be filled with what the public taste demands—that they crowd themselves upon the attention, always presenting something new, and for the most part, something fascinating, and many fall victims to their evil influences. But what, you may ask, are the specific objections to novel reading? I answer,

1st. That the representations, which they give are too highly wrought. Their scenes of distress are entirely different, in degree at least, from any thing, which you see in real life. The virtues, which they depict, are distinguished, signal, striking virtues, such as you do not meet with, in the common, every day scenes of life. And, consequently, the knowledge which you get, or suppose you are getting of mankind and of human nature, is only a knowledge of the pictures of the wri-

ter's imagination, it is not a knowledge of mankind, and of human nature, as it appears around you, in the common and every day walks of life. The effect of this is, that it leads your mind off upon a wrong tract, in a wrong direction, excites unfounded expectations in regard to human nature, and, thus shuts up the mind against a simple and profitable observation of men as they appear around you. This, then, is my first objection to the indiscriminate reading of novels.

2d. My second objection is, that they are the most difficult books to read profitably. I have pointed out what I conceive to be the most profitable way of reading, that is, to read slowly and pause often, and reflect long upon what you read. And now, I appeal to those of you who are familiar with novel reading, and ask if your own experience does not testify that novels are the most difficult of all books to be read in this way? Does not your highly excited interest in the plot, your anxiety to know the issue—do not these, I ask, carry you forward with great rapidity? Is it not often the case, that your reading is

only skipping along from place to place, reading just enough to catch the story? And, when you have closed the book, what is fixed in your memory, the simple outlines of the story merely, or the peculiarities and principles of character? Do these books excite and aid you to form habits of reflection? I am well satisfied that any young lady who really wishes to read, in the way which I have pointed out, with much thought and reflection will find it more difficult to effect this, in reading novels than in reading any other books. She will find it somewhat difficult to form this habit under any circumstances and with all the helps she may obtain. But she will find, that the indiscriminate and excessive reading of novels, will not only afford her no assistance, but will exert a powerful influence in opposition to this habit. And this is my second objection to this kind of reading.

3d. My third objection is, that they excite a distaste for reading of a more serious and profitable character, and unfit the mind for a right improvement of serious reading and conversation. How often is it the case, that

the novel reader lays down, in disgust, or only yawns over the most serious and valuable books than can be put into her hands, books rich in thought and beautiful in style, books calculated to excite thought and afford food for meditation. Nothing but what will produce an almost feverish excitement, and carry her with rail-road rapidity, over the course, has any charms for her. And should she, by dint of perseverance, read a serious book, there will be no habits of reflection, no trains of association, that are in accordance with what she reads. And consequently, she will derive but little profit from her reading. And this is my third objection, that it produces a distaste for more serious and profitable reading. Perhaps the difficulty here lies deeper and extends wider than even the distaste for serious reading. It may be, that the habit is formed of seeking for pleasure rather than for improvement in reading, a habit, which, if once fixed, will in all probability extend its withering influences over the whole character, exciting the search for pleasure rather than inducing devotion to duty.

4th. My fourth objection is that the indiscriminate and excessive reading of novels, blunts and deadens the finer sensibilities of our nature. I will illustrate by a reference to our benevolent feelings. In novels, scenes of distress are described, highly wrought, deeply affecting. The heart of the reader is moved, and with many, tears even flow readily as they read. But they are not moved by their feelings to action: It all evaporates in mere feeling. And these persons, who will weep profusely over the pages of a novel, will look with utter indifference upon the real distresses of actual life, of a friend or a neighbor. Now it is a fact in the philosophy of the human mind, that wherever the better feelings of our nature are excited upon any subject, and are suffered to evaporate in mere feeling, to pass away without producing action, the feelings themselves are either blunted and deadened, or are cherished only for the passive luxury of the mere indulgence of feeling. If a preacher, for example, is in the habit of attempting to move his hearers by terror, although he may succeed for a time, yet soon his terrific lan-

guage loses its power over his hearers and they will listen to it with perfect indifference. They undoubtedly felt, and felt deeply at first but they did not act in accordance with their feelings. Consequently, they now either do not feel or their feelings have lost all power over their conduct. So it is with the readers of novels. Their feelings are at first excited, but there is no opportunity for them to act in accordance with their feelings. Consequently, they either cease to feel or their feelings are entirely separated from their conduct and have lost all control over it. In this way the indiscriminate and excessive reading of novels blunts and deadens the finer sensibilities of our nature.

5th. My fifth objection to novel reading and the last which I shall now notice, is that they tend to magnify and render too prominent the passion of love, and to teach the most absurd and dangerous notions in regard to it. If ever you have become acquainted with one who is under the influence of the novel reading mania, you must have observed that the passion of love, its symptoms, its peculiar

feelings and pleasures, have become the engrossing topic of her conversation, the theme of her daily thoughts, and the subject of her midnight dreams. And then too, she gathers foolish and absurd and dangerous notions from reading, in regard to the nature and proper influence of this passion. It is connected in her mind, not principally with the truly estimable and lovely qualities of the mind and the heart, but with bright eyes, and elegant proportions, and fair looks, and soft flattering speeches. It is regarded, not, like any of the other passions of our nature, as what must be watched and governed by reason and religious principle, for whose influence over us we must give account. No, it is regarded as omnipotent, and uncontrollable. The idea of asking, in regard to the object of attachment, whether he be worthy or not, whether our attachment itself be proper or not, when one has fallen in love, would be regarded, by a novel reading young lady, as the very height of absurdity. In this way, reasonable, sensible, religious people sometimes, under the evil influence of this evil practice, become thorough fatalists

in the article of love. And that most holy of all earthly unions, that close and intimate relation, which more nearly and more permanently affects happiness and character than any other, is often formed without the least exercise of reason, judgement, or principle, but in blind subserviency to the passion of love.

I have thus enumerated some of the more prominent objections against novel reading, indiscriminate and excessive novel reading. They are that the representations, with which the mind is familiarized, are too highly colored, that they usually so hurry the mind along and so excite the feelings as to prevent thought and reflection upon what is read, that they excite a distaste for reading of a more serious and profitable character, that they blunt and deaden the finer sensibilities of our natures, and that they magnify into undue importance the passion of love and teach absurd and dangerous notions of its nature and influence and proper place among the principles of our nature.

But, here you will ask, if I intend to object

to the reading of all fictitious writings? By no means. The expressions I have used, have been the indiscriminate and excessive reading of novels. But I would, if possible, point out a distinction between fictitious writings, which are profitable and those which are not so. And here I go back to the parables of our Savior for the distinction which I would notice. Our Savior spake in parables. What were these parables? They were scenes and stories, pictured forth in the imagination, for the purpose of illustrating moral truth. But the purpose is kept distinctly in view. You see that the moral truth, which he would illustrate, is the object upon which his mind's eye is fixed. Nay more, you perceive that the object, for which he is laboring is to present that moral truth more vividly to the minds of his hearers. The parables, therefore, are not true as stories, but the instruction conveyed by them, is truth, real, valuable truth. As illustrations, they do represent the truth more clearly and vividly, than it could otherwise have been done. Now there may be, and there are, fictitious wri-

tings, corresponding in some humble degree, with these parables. In reading even these, you may indeed be interested in the mere story. And you may so read as only to remember the story. But, if you exercise one moment's thought, you must see that the minds of the writers are fixed upon moral truth, and that the great object for which they are laboring, is to set that truth distinctly and vividly before the minds of the readers.

For this kind of fictitious writing there is a strong call, a deep foundation in our very nature. For instance, I wish to make you see and feel the value of christian faith. Suppose I tell you in set, formal, abstract terms, what it is and what are its effects. You may believe what I say, but you do not see it, and feel it. But, if I say here is a neighbor who is under the influence of this faith, and it has made him more upright in his dealings, more kind in his family, more devoted to all that is pure and good, that, in seasons of temptation it nerves him to withstand, that, when friends are taken in death he is calm and cheerful ; suppose, I say, that I describe all this in

true colors, then you would not only believe, you would see, and feel and desire to possess it. Nay more, suppose that I state an abstract conclusion and state it in general terms, what process do you go through in order to verify the truth of my statement? Do you not by the power of imagination, bring up to your mind's eye the individual cases, from which the general rule was drawn, and go through all the steps and follow the process by which the conclusion is verified. That is in order to make the truth your own you must go through the process which, he who states the truth, has gone through. He has become acquainted with a certain class of facts, and, from these, he draws a general conclusion. To verify that conclusion, and make it your own, you must, by the power of imagination, summon up a similar class of facts and trace the steps by means of which the conclusion was formed. There is then a call in nature for the exercise of the imagination in supposing cases for the illustration of abstract truths.

But I consider this class of fictitious wri-

tings as entirely and widely separated from another and a much larger class. A class where the imagination of the writer is suffered to run wild, where the great object is to excite deep, thrilling interest in the plot, while there is manifest no distinct and visible moral truth as the object to be set forth and illustrated. While the former class may be read with profit, if read with care and reflection, the latter unfits the mind for all serious thought, all self sacrificing devotion to duty.

And finally, I would say, when you read fictitious writings, even of the better class, watch carefully their influence upon your own mind. If they awaken a more earnest desire for improvement, and you leave them with a more earnest devotion to a right performance of all the duties of life, then may you hope they have been useful and profitable. But when they excite only thrilling emotions, which render the details of duty dry and dull, then may you doubt as to their influence, then may you pause and hesitate in your devotion to them. Thus much upon novel reading. I have spoken plainly and more at length than

I should have done, had I not known how fascinating are these works, and how prone young ladies are to seek in them only for the passive luxury of excited feelings. I would then most earnestly warn you, my young friends, against these enticing but dangerous hinderances to your intellectual and moral improvement.

But, you will remember the general principle upon which I am speaking, that your profit from reading will depend not upon the amount of what you read but upon the character of what you read. Besides novels, there is a vast amount of other light reading against which you should ever be on your guard. In reviews, and especially in those periodicals designed expressly for ladies, there is much of this light reading, which, though pleasant for the time, unfit the mind for serious studies, and for grappling successfully with the duties and trials of life. These may be occasionally read for recreation. But the great body of your reading should be of a serious and a solid character, works which may excite thought and awaken reflection. I have not here time

to point out the books which may be most profitably read, nor would this be well. For minds are differently constituted, so that books, which may be more profitable to one would be less profitable to another.

But I cannot refrain from naming one book, which, if read aright, must be read with profit by all. I refer to the sacred Scriptures. This book contains a great variety—history, poetry and perceptive instructions. It relates to high and holy subjects. It teaches us concerning God, a holy and improving object of thought, concerning our Savior, a perfect example of what all should strive to become. It lays open to us our own natures, teaches us what we are, what we are capable of becoming, and what we are required to be. How vast the subjects of thought and reflection laid open to view in this Holy volume; how extensive and various the range, and how well adapted to all the changing circumstances of our condition. Are you in prosperity? Here are subjects of thought adapted to this state. Are you in affliction? Here are hopes and promises, which are adapted, if made the

subjects of thought and reflection, to soothe the afflicted soul. And so of every circumstance, condition and relation in life.

But the rule I have laid down in regard to profitable reading, is peculiarly applicable to this most sacred of books, it should be read with much thought and reflection, with much self-examination and self application. You read the expression, '*God is love.*' It is but a short and simple sentence. But what untold depths of meaning are hidden under these few words, God is love. A condensed description of his whole character and his whole government. You may read it hastily and not be profited. You may make it the theme of thought and reflection for years, and connect with it all your observations of God's dealings in the works and laws of nature, and in the events of his providence, and the more you think, reflect and enquire, the more will the meaning of this simple sentence be unfolded to your minds. And there will be continually rising up some new view to enrich your hearts, to enlarge your minds, and to fill your souls with all that is great and ennobling.

Would you then secure intellectual improvement, would you render your judgment correct and sober, would you gain clear and correct notions of man, of yourselves, of human nature and human duties and human destiny? Make the Bible the volume of your daily perusal. I have been surprised to find, as I have conversed with others, with those who have enjoyed but few privileges for intellectual improvement, and have read but little, I have been surprised to find how well developed were their minds, how much strengthened and improved their mental powers, how well regulated their imaginations, how sober their views, and how natural and correct their judgments. I have asked for the reasons. I have found them to be readers of the Bible, persons, who read slowly indeed, but reflect much upon what they read. If then you have no fondness for the reading of the Bible, you have no reason to suspect the purity and correctness of your taste, you have reason to fear, either that your heart, your affections or your moral feelings are not what they should be. And should you find that novels and

light reading are taking off your affections from the Bible, and destroying your interest in its perusal, you have reason to fear from their influence upon your tastes, and upon intellectual improvement and moral good.—

Young ladies, to say nothing of moral and spiritual improvement, I would say, would you improve your minds by reading, read the Bible, read it daily, read it carefully. Think, reflect much upon what you read. Read it with prayer. Read it with much application of its principles and instructions to your own hearts and lives. If you will read the Bible, and read it in this way, I am confident that your intellectual improvement will be much promoted, that your imagination will be properly regulated, your mental powers much invigorated, your judgment rendered sober, and your views of man and his relations, duties and interests rendered just, correct and improving. Indeed, could I hope that in all the various suggestions contained in the series of letters, I am now addressing to you, this single one would be practically observed by the young ladies who may read what I write,

I should feel that I had done much to promote your intellectual improvement, and to render that intellectual improvement the instrument of moral and spiritual progress.— Could I hope that those young ladies, who may read these letters, would, from this time forward, make the reading of the Bible a daily practice, I should have good reason to hope that I had done much to remove from female society, frivolity, vanity, devotion to dress, pleasure and mere amusement, and to aid them in becoming worthy of themselves, and of their own intellectual and spiritual natures, worthy of God's approbation. I repeat then my suggestions, and, where I upon my death bed, just about to enter the presence of my God and my Saviour, and surrounded by a family of daughters, or a circle of sisters, and with the thought upon my mind, that the solemnity of the scene would give to what I might then say a lasting influence upon the characters and happiness of those around me, were I, under such circumstances, and with such thoughts upon my mind, asked to give the single direction, which might be more

important than all others, I would say, daughters, sisters, read the Bible—read it with much care, with much thought and reflection, with fervent prayer—daughters, sisters, read the Bible.

Is there one among the readers of these pages, who will say, I feel no interest in the Bible. It is to me a dull book, a sealed book. When I read it, it is from a sense of duty and not from the prompting of interest? If there be such a one, to her I would offer a few suggestions, by way of aiding her to acquire a deeper interest in this best of all books. It may be, my friend, that your want of interest arises from your having used the scriptures in your childhood, as a school book. It was then a task, assigned you, to read a certain portion. You read it, not for the purpose of learning its instructions. You read it, simply for the purpose of pronouncing aright and with the proper accents, emphasis and pauses the words of the book. You blundered over your lesson, you were corrected upon it, you cast your book aside, in careless indifference, as a class book nearly on a rank with, and to

be used the same as any other class book. In all this you lost your reverence for the book, you acquired a disrelish for it. And now, when you take it up, something of the same feelings come over you. At least your indifference has become so settled and confirmed, that it is almost impossible to break it up. Whether the supposition, which I have made be applicable to yourselves or not, I cannot tell. But of this I am fully satisfied, that the reading of the scriptures in school, as a class book, for the simple purpose of learning to read, has been productive of incalculable evils, in the indifference to the sacred contents of the book, which is so often in after life lamented. Do you ask if I would have the book banished from our schools? By no means. I would give it a prominent place in them. I would not lay it side by side with other books. I would elevate it above them. I would have it used in our schools as a peculiar book and used for a peculiar purpose. At the opening and the close of the school, I would have all other books laid aside, and the school should be hushed

and silent. Then let the Bible be taken out. Let the teacher say a few words upon the character of the book, as containing the records of a communication from God. Let a passage be read either by the teacher or by some of the pupils. And then let a few words more be added, explaining and applying the instruction of the passage read. And let all this be accompanied by acts of devotion, by a prayer on the part of the teacher, or by the repetition in concert of the Lord's prayer by the whole school. In some such way as this, I would have the Bible used in our schools. And then should I hope that the effect would be, to excite rather than destroy interest in the book. You will pardon me for this digression, which seemed necessary to prevent a misunderstanding of my previous remarks.

It may be, I have said, that your want of interest in the Bible, is the result of your having used it as a class book in school : or it may be, that your want of interest arises from other circumstances. The Bible is often read as a single book, composed at one time, and

all for one purpose. And being read in this way, it is often read without interest. The circumstances under which each portion was written, and the object for which they were severally prepared, are often unknown to the reader. And then the division into chapters and verses, although convenient for reference, does much to break up and render obscure the sense and general tenor of the whole. It may be, that your want of interest, like that of many others, may have arisen from some one or from all of these causes.

But, from whatever causes it may have arisen, the great question is, how shall this indifference be broken up? And on this question I would remark, first, that it is a general law of the human mind that interest will be excited in almost any subject to which we pay strict and devoted and continued attention. Have you no interest, for example, in paintings? Go visit daily a gallery, where are exhibited the works of the best masters, attend carefully to the paintings before you, examine all their peculiarities, study out all their beauties, compare them with one another.—

As you do this, you will find an interest in these paintings gradually growing upon you? Have you no interest in sacred music. Go visit those places where you may listen to the purest and best exhibitions of skill and taste in the department. Attend carefully to what you hear, watch the peculiarities of each part, voice, or piece, and compare one with another. In this way, although you may never become a skilful critic in the technicals of sacred music, yet you will find a glowing interest in these performances creeping over you. You will soon take pleasure in them. You perceive that, by devoted and continued attention to a subject, you may acquire an interest in that subject. This same law of human nature will apply to the sacred scriptures. By devoted and continued attention to them, you may acquire an interest in them.

But how, you ask, shall you proceed in your attention to them? I would not advise you to undertake to read the Bible through in course as a matter of duty. But I would say take each book by itself, as a separate volume, just as though it were not bound in the

same volume with the other books. Read each separate book through, just as you would any similar volume. In doing this, it will be of some assistance, if you can avail yourself of some short introduction to the several books, such as the Bible Companion, a work published a year or two since in Philadelphia. Here you will learn something of the circumstances under which the several books were written, together with the objects for which they were written. Here too you will find some little analysis of the contents of each book, which may aid you in mapping out these contents, if I may so speak, in your own mind, so as to be able to remember the places of important and interesting topics. And this I think very important. You should try to have, in your mind, some clear views of the different places in the sacred books, where these important topics may be found. In this way, by reading the Bible in order to understand, you will be prepared for the more profitable, devotional and practical reading of the book. Do you wish to refresh your mind at any time, upon some point of duty, you will

know where to turn for the instruction which you desire. Do you wish to find language to express your penitence, your humility, or your thanksgiving, you will know where to turn for such language. Are you on a bed of sickness, you can, with this knowledge of the scriptures, direct your friend to such passages as may best comport with your feelings, and best adapted to your wants.

Then too, I would advise the reading of the Bible in this way, by selections of passages appropriate to your peculiar wants and feelings. I need not dwell, I trust, upon the importance of making yourself acquainted, as far as you may be able, with the manners and customs, with the peculiarities of thought and speech, and with the natural history of the times and regions spoken of or alluded to in the Bible. The importance of this you will at once perceive. Nor need I urge you to compare scripture with scripture. The very process which I have recommended, of mapping out the scripture in your own minds, will be the most effectual method of doing this. I would simply repeat, then, what I have al-

ready said. Read the Bible, daily, carefully, with much thought, with fervent prayer, and you will, I trust, soon find yourself becoming deeply interested in its contents.

But here, it may be, that another and a different objection will arise. Some young lady, as she reads what I have just now written, may say, I am wholly indifferent to serious things. Why then should I read the Bible? Does not the dilligent reading of the Bible imply an interest in serious things, and ought I not, therefore to wait until I feel this interest? To such a one, I would say, the reading of the Bible, in the way in which I have suggested, is the very way to become interested in serious things. It is a knowledge of the truth which excites emotions and feeling. Were it my desire to interest you in the cause of the slave, I must set before you the truth upon the subject, before I could reasonably expect that you would become interested. Do I wish to awaken in you an interest in the subject of temperance? I must set before you the truth upon the subject. And the truth, when once clearly perceived will excite

emotion. So, if you will devotedly, perseveringly read the Bible, you will then be made acquainted with those truths, in regard to God and the Saviour, in regard to the evils of sin and the way of salvation, in regard to the duties and the destiny of man, which, when fully perceived, can hardly fail of exciting emotion and interest, of leading you to seek and pray for the quickening and renewing influences of God's spirit. Would you then become religious? Read the Bible.

I have spoken of reading as a means of intellectual improvement and have offered such suggestions as seemed to me important upon the subject. As another means of intellectual improvement I would mention the importance of a habit of observation. The means of exciting thought and reflection; resources for intellectual nourishment are not confined to books.—Nor is intellectual progress confined to the study of books. The whole world, both of nature and of man, is full of instruction, and, if studied, it will not only fill the mind with knowledge, but will afford that intellectual exercise, which will promote intellec-

tual development.—If then you have formed the habit of observation, you will never be at a loss for employment for your thoughts. Every person you meet, will, in the peculiarities of character presented, afford food for thought—every event of providence, and every object of nature, will thus be the means of intellectual development. But what is the habit of observation? It is not merely the habit of looking at things. But the habit of thinking and reflecting upon what you see. The man of observation is not the man who has actually seen the greatest number and greatest variety of objects; he is the man who has reflected the most carefully upon what he has seen, and, in this way, derived the most valuable instruction from them. What I would have you seek, is the habit of inquiry and thought and reflection, in regard to every object which may be presented to your notice, seeking the peculiarities, inquiring for the causes, learning the effects and tracing the relations and connections of one circumstance, event or object with another. In this way, you will be constantly making improvement—your intellectual powers will

be constantly acquiring new strength and greater freedom and more full developement. Form, then, the habit of close, accurate observation, and you will be possessed of a powerful instrument for intellectual improvement.

Nay more, this habit will have a further and more extensive influence. If you can employ your minds in thinking about the objects you have seen, you can also, under the influence of the same habit, employ them in thinking about the lectures and discourses which you have heard. And who is it that derives the greatest profit from what she hears? Not she who hears the most, not she who hears with the deepest interest at the time. But she who thinks most carefully upon what she has heard, after she has done hearing. And here is the point where many fail, and the reason that they do not derive so much improvement as they otherwise might from the lectures and discourses which they hear. They hear with interest and with pleasure, but, when they have done hearing, they turn their thoughts to other things.—What they have heard is soon gone from their

minds, and no distinct and lasting impression is left. But, if they would think over what they have heard, or talk it over with their companions, or write out an abstract, they would make it more entirely their own, they would gain much valuable knowledge, which they now let slip, and they would acquire by the means, great intellectual strength and development.

There are two other topics, which ought to be noticed in this connection, as relating to subjects which have a bearing upon intellectual and moral improvement, the topics of dress and amusements or recreations. Upon these topics I will offer a few words. You will not expect me to be minute in my remarks upon dress. I cannot lay down rules, but I will endeavor to point out such suggestions, as have been the result of much observation. And, first, it is a general law of the human mind, that the employment of the mental powers upon trifling and unimportant objects, tends to weaken the mind itself. And the same result is, to a certain degree, witnessed when these trifling objects are exalted to a

rank in our estimation, altogether beyond their intrinsic worth, or their comparative deserts. The operation of this law of the mind, is often distinctly exhibited in the influence upon intellectual character, exerted by too great a devotion to dress. I have seen those, whose whole souls seemed to be absorbed in their devotion to dress. They judged of others by the dress. They were distressingly and foolishly anxious in regard to their own dress. Hours would be spent, thoughts and anxieties would be wasted, upon this subject to the neglect of other and more important subjects of attention. And then, any little deficiency would be the source of more unhappiness than a much greater intellectual and moral deficiency. The result of all this has been, that the capacities of the mind seemed to have lost their vigor, their power for the comprehensive grasp of an important subject. Mental imbecility has been the consequence. The correctness of this view you will at once perceive, if you take an extreme case. Suppose a young lady, even of a bright and powerful mind, to be employed to years of maturity, in all the niceties of baby house upholstery, and doll dressing finery. She may excel in these trifling employments. But

would she not lose all the vigor and energy of her mind? Would not her mental powers be rendered dwarfish, and their growth and development be entirely prevented? Such would be the inevitable result. And the same result, exhibited in a less striking degree, may be expected by every young lady, who devotes undue attention to the subject of dress. I would not inculcate carelessness nor indifference in regard to dress. For this would be injurious in a mental and moral point of view. We are so constituted, that we cannot be careless and indifferent in regard to what we may esteem comparatively trifling, without the danger of becoming careless in regard to more important matters. She who is careless in regard to dress, therefore, will be in great danger of becoming careless in regard to her mental and moral habits. So, too, she who exercises no taste in regard to dress, will soon neglect to exercise taste in regard to other matters.

Dress, then, should receive that attention which its intrinsic merits and its comparative importance demands. The care should be, not

to exalt it to an undue prominence, not to bestow upon it exclusive or undue attention. There should be perfect neatness, there should be the exercise of nice taste, and a careful study of what is becoming. But there should be no mere love of finery and display, there should be no great attention bestowed upon the subject as of importance in itself. What I would impress upon your minds is, that dress should be regarded as subsidiary to mental and moral improvement. And I would have you ever bear it in mind, that in the degree and manner of your attention to this subject, you are forming mental and moral habits, which will exert a powerful influence upon character. If this thought is only borne in mind, there will be no need of particular rules and directions upon the subject. Your own good sense, and delicate taste, and nice discernment of propriety will be your best guide. Thus much have I felt bound to say upon the subject of dress, in its influence upon intellectual habits and moral character.

In regard to amusements and recreations, I have sometimes thought that we overlooked

or forgot the refreshment which may be derived from a mere change of pursuits. Consequently, we often fatigue and unfit ourselves for mental efforts, and destroy, for the time, our moral energies, by the exciting nature of our amusements. A young lady is often so engrossed in the anticipations of a ball or assembly, so absorbed in thought and feeling while prepared for it, and so highly excited amidst its scenes, that she is unfitted for any vigorous and profitable intellectual efforts for days after. And, then too, in the fatigue which follows, her moral energies are prostrated. Had this young lady simply danced at home, with her brothers and sisters, or with friends and neighbors who might be present, without any previous feverish anticipations, or any fatiguing preparations, it would have been a healthful and refreshing amusement. So if a young lady is fatigued with long continued study, or feels that she is in danger of neglecting to take sufficient exercise for her health, let her leave for a while her studies, and bestir herself in useful household labors, and she will find herself much refreshed. I

am aware that some young ladies endeavor to secure the exercise necessary for health, while at school, by walking. Walking is indeed good exercise. And then it is in the open air, which is another advantage. But the danger is, that, while taking exercise in this way, she will take it simply as exercise, without having her mind diverted from herself by her interest in some other object, which will diminish its good influence, or else she will contract a habit of gadding, and acquire an uneasiness amid the ordinary round of duties and pleasures at home, and will imperceptibly fall under the influence of a love of outward excitement. Young people are not aware how soon tastes are acquired and habits formed in this respect, nor of the power which such tastes and habits exert over the character. Let a young lady walk out regularly every afternoon, for the sake of exercise and although she may be strictly conscientious, may take her walks simply for the purpose of promoting her health, yet it will be but a very short time, before she will feel uneasy to remain at home of an afternoon. Let your walks for exercise then, be occasion-

al only, and not regular, and seek for health in the regular discharge of your appropriate duties. The very change from study to household duties, will be refreshing. On this subject, as in regard to dress, what I wish is to impress upon your minds the thought that, the degree of attention which you may devote to them and the manner in which you may attend to them, are exerting a powerful influence in the formation of mental and moral habits. If you will bear this thought in mind and ever inquire carefully for the influence which your amusements and recreations are exerting upon you, your own judgment will be your best guide in regard to them. If you find that they are engrossing your affections, are unfitting you for sober thought, serious reading, or vigorous effort in the discharge of incumbent duties, you have great reason to fear the result. In regard to recreation and refreshment then, I would say, seek it often in a mere change from one useful employment to another of the same character. And when you engage in scenes of mere amusement, avoid those which are exciting

and fatiguing, and seek those which are pure, simple and consequently healthful.

One word more and I will close. I have in this, and in the preceeding letter, as indeed I have all along, addressed you as beings possessed of minds of a high order, minds capable of improvement, in all that is great and good, minds which entitle you to deep and heartfelt respect, and which are worthy of your own most assiduous care in their cultivation. I wish you to feel that you are not mere toys to be played with, decked out, flattered and amused, but that you are capable of great intellectual and moral power. I wish, if possible, to inspire you with a deep feeling of self-respect, a self-respect, which as it is based upon the capacities God has bestowed upon you, will make you humble in view of your attainments, and will deter you from any course of conduct derogatory to your high capacities, from yielding to that vanity and frivolity which may retard your highest mental and moral development. Nay more, I wish, if possible, to awaken in you the feeling that all your capacities are treas-

ures committed to you upon trust, for the right improvement and cultivation of which you are accountable to God. I wish to do this in the hope that, if these feelings are once awakened within you, they will prompt you to efforts in your own intellectual, moral and religious self-cultivation, proportioned to your respective capacities, and in accordance with your respective peculiarities of circumstance and condition.

LETTER VI.

FEMALE INFLUENCE.

The fact stated that every one exerts some influence—that we are accountable for the character of the influence which we exert—Female influence to be exerted indirectly, by the cheerful and appropriate discharge of private and domestic duties—The reasons of this opinion—what it is right for one to do is right for all similarly situated to do—The question not whether they have a right but whether it is right for them—if females choose to leave the quiet scenes of private life and enter the arena of contention and public effort, they must be willing to abide by the natural consequences of their conduct In all civilized society two classes of duties, the duties of the house and the cares and labors of business females cannot conduct the latter—public efforts connected more directly with the latter, therefore these are inappropriate to woman—Jesus Christ called no females to be of the number of his apostles—Paul's opinion of the sphere of female efforts. Suggestions as to the proper mode of influence—The Christian daughter and sister to let religion appear in its good influences upon her own character if she would influence father or brothers—Females can promote

moral reform—by elevating their own characters—by shewing a marked regard for worth of character—by giving countenance to amusements which are pure and healthful—advised to have nothing to do with moral reform societies—Suggestions upon the subject of temperance movements—upon the subject of slavery, abolition petitions—Females may do good by visiting the sick—the poor—educating the young—engaging in sunday school instruction, Conclusion.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS:

In urging upon you the claims of christianity, I stated that she asked two things of each one of you; first, that you would, each of you, strive to form your characters in accordance with her instructions and her spirit, and, second, that you would endeavor to exert an influence in promoting the spread of truth and piety, the reign of peace and holiness around you. I have already dwelt, as you know, upon several particulars in regard to your individual moral and intellectual improvement. I am now to urge upon you the claim of christianity to your influence.

This claim is in perfect accordance with your natures and your relations. It is said in scripture that 'none of us liveth to himself.' And

these words express a most solemn and important truth. We are created with social affections. We are bound together in society by the strong bonds of mutual dependence, reciprocal interests and personal attachments. And these bonds bring us, to a greater or less degree, under each other's influence. There is no man, woman or child living, that is not, to a greater or less degree, under the influence of some other human being. So too, there is no man, woman or child living, who does not exert some influence, for good or for evil, over some other human being. This I am aware is a strong, it may seem to you, a startling position. And yet I am satisfied, that it is as true as it is strong or startling. I repeat the assertion, for I wish it to be impressed upon your hearts and indelibly fixed in your memories. There is no man, woman or child, who does not exert some influence, for good or for evil, over some other human being. Do you doubt the truth of the assertion? Do you ask how it is possible for a child, a mere infant, to exert influence? Come with me. See that father, that mother, as they look, with sweet compla-

cency, upon their smiling babe. Have not new feelings been excited in their hearts, at the birth of that child? Have not new resolutions been formed, and slumbering energies been aroused? If they are persons of the least reflection, must they not feel that a solemn responsibility now rests upon them, that new dignity is added to their characters, and new importance is attached to all their conduct, in the circumstance that to them is committed the training of an intellectual and moral, a spiritual and an immortal being? The very presence, then, the very thought of that child, although the child itself is not accountable, will not be without its influence upon parental hearts and parental characters. And the character of this influence, too, will vary with the differing characteristics of the child. If the child be weak and puny, or even idiotic, what an influence of a peculiar character will be felt. Parents, under the trial, will become either more patient or more peevish.

Every child then, that lives, exerts an influence. And is not this tenfold more the case, in regard to those who have advanced beyond the

years of childhood? Have you not, in some instances, seen the characters of young ladies entirely changed, either for the better or for the worse, through the influence exerted over them by the characters of their associates? Have you not seen the characters of your acquaintances gradually growing better or becoming worse, in consequence of the character and influence of those with whom matrimonial connections have been formed? I wish, my young friends, you would dwell upon this fact in your condition. Wherever you are, in whatever circumstances you may be placed, you are exerting an influence, either for good or for evil. You have each one of you, a sphere around you, it may be of greater or of less extent, in which your influence is all powerful. It is more powerful than you imagine. I know not but I might say more powerful than you can conceive. It operates indeed silently, imperceptibly it may be, but not the less powerfully on that account. Suppose you profess to be interested in the subject of religion. This very fact will exert a powerful influence upon the circle of your friends and acquaintances. If

they see you becoming really engaged, in the cultivation of your own spiritual natures, less selfish, more kind and amiable and charitable, more conscientious and devout, they will be filled with respect for the religion, in which you profess to be interested. But, should they see you becoming bitter in your sectarian feelings, filled with spiritual pride, no more willing to give up your own pleasures for the happiness of others, they will begin to say, within themselves, if such be the influence of religion, we desire not to be its subjects. Thus you perceive, that, while you have been entirely unconscious of the fact, an influence and a powerful influence has gone forth from your conduct for good or for evil. Remember then that it is not for you to say whether you will exert an influence or not. For it is one of the inherent laws of your nature that you must exert influence of some kind and to some degree upon those around you. The only question which is within your control, relates to the character of that influence. And it is this thought which renders the subject so important, the thought that you are, each of you,

accountable before God for the character of the influence which you may exert. Every one who has reached such a degree of discretion as to know good from evil, right from wrong, is an accountable being—accountable for the character of the influence which he or she may exert. That influence is the natural consequence of the conduct pursued.—And conduct, so far as its moral character is concerned, is the result of voluntary choice. If you choose to conduct under the circumstances in which you are placed, in one way rather than in another, you are accountable for all the influences which may flow from the course which you pursue. You cannot escape this accountability if you attempt to stand neutral. There is no such thing as moral or social neutrality. But I trust that I have said enough to establish my position.

Christianity then comes to you just as you are, and puts in claims, which are in perfect accordance with your natures. She sees that from the very constitution of human nature—from the very relations in which you are placed, you must exert some influence, that, for

the character of that influence, you are accountable before God, and she asks that you will strive to exert that influence in her behalf. She asks that, since you must exert an influence, either for or against her you will endeavor to put forth that influence under her guidance and for the more rapid and widely extended spread of her spirit and principles. Will you, my young friends, comply with this, the second claim of christianity? I trust that you will. For there are the most powerful motives to urge you to this. When you consider that this is the course which God requires of you, when you think of what your Saviour has done for you and that this is what he asks in return, when you feel that the course required, is none other than the course demanded by a regard to your own present and future happiness, you will, I trust, comply with the requisitions of christianity, and come up resolutely and boldly to the work of the Lord.

But now comes the question as to the manner in which you are to comply, the proper mode of putting forth your exertions, the appropriate sphere of female influence. An

here I would remark that it is common, at the present day, to flatter females, with glowing descriptions of the vast amount, and the striking character of the influence and which they are capable of exerting, and which they are therefore called upon to exert. The heads of some females are turned by this flattery—Having heard much of the vast amount of female influence, and not beholding the striking and visible results of their own efforts in the ordinary sphere of their duties, they believe themselves called upon to step aside from this sphere and to engage in more open and direct efforts. Consequently we now see, what has seldom been seen before, *ladies* leaving the quiet of domestic scenes, and wandering forth as public speakers, debaters and lecturers—the public agitators of the community. Nay more, we see them moving forward in bodies, by means of their petitions, to interfere with the appropriate duties of legislation, to dictate upon subjects deeply affecting the relations of these states with each other and with neighboring communities. These things

I say we see. For, strange as it may seem, I allude to well known facts.

And, since things are so, it is necessary for me to speak distinctly and plainly of the appropriate sphere of female influence. You will have learned, from what I have already said, that I do not differ from others so much in regard to the amount, as in regard to the character of female influence, and the way in which that influence is to be exerted. I do most sincerely believe, that woman can, and that woman does, exert a most powerful influence upon society. But I, as sincerely, believe that the way in which she is to render her influence most salutary, as well as most powerful, is by the cheerful and regular and faithful discharge of the duties of private, domestic and social life. Her influence must come upon us, not with a mighty rush, like a tornado—not with loud professions and boisterous appeals, in a striking and visible manner. If it does, we shall nerve ourselves to withstand its power. But, if, like the atmosphere around us, it is silent and unobserved—sending its purifying and health-giving influ-

ences through every nerve and fibre and muscle of the social system, while its modes of operation are unseen and unfelt, then shall we yield to its power and rejoice in its salutary effects. To be more particular, I would say that, in any village, town or city, the character of female society will exert a most powerful influence upon the general social character of the place. The more solid and substantial, the more prudent and economical, the more given to useful reading, improving reflection and industrious habits are the ladies, in any place, the more will the general social character of that place be improved in these respects. In short, I sincerely believe that the more there is of sound knowledge, of wise discretion, of pure feeling, of refined affection and of elevated sentiment among the ladies of any particular community, the more of these there will be in the general social character of that community.—All this I say I sincerely believe. You perceive, therefore, that I am strong in the belief that every lady, as well as every other human being, must exert some influence, either for good or for evil, and

that I have as exalted an opinion, as any one can have, of the amount of the influence which ladies can and do exert.

But I believe, most fully, that female influence is most salutary, most powerful and most becoming to female character, when it operates indirectly, silently and without any striking manifestations, when it arises from the cheerful and regular discharge of private and domestic duties, rather than from any open and direct and public efforts. But how so, you will ask? How will a cheerful discharge of duties, which are altogether of a retired and private character, exert a more powerful and salutary influence upon the community, than more open and direct efforts? I will answer by an illustration. Suppose that three fourths of the ladies of any particular place, are professors of religion, technically so called, connected with some one of the various christian churches there established.—Suppose that many of these have fathers, husbands, brothers or sons, who are comparatively indifferent to the subject of religion. Suppose, still further, that facts would warrant the assertion

that these three fourths were by far the most exemplary ladies in the place, the most cheerful and happy, the most diligent and industrious, the most prudent and economical, the most discreet in all their language, the most obedient daughters, the most affectionate sisters, the most devoted wives, the most faithful mothers. Suppose, I say, that such were the marked and known character of the religious portion of the females. Would not fathers, I ask, and husbands, brothers and sons, be filled, by this circumstance, with deep and heartfelt respect for religion? Would they not rejoice in its institutions and influence, and contribute liberally and willingly to its support? Nay more, would they not be prepared to examine with candor its claims, and would they not be moved to this examination, when they perceived that it was operating to make better daughters, better wives, better sisters, better mothers? And would there not be a thousand silent and unseen, but powerful streams of influence constantly flowing forth from this general character of the religious portion of the female community, to pu-

rify and make glad the place of their residence? Upon this supposition, these religious females are exerting a salutary and a powerful influence upon the community. And how are they doing this? Simply by the cheerful and faithful discharge of their private, domestic and social duties.

Now let us turn to another picture. Suppose that these three fourths become deeply anxious for the religious improvement of those near and dear to them, and suffer their anxiety to move them to direct and open efforts, in order to produce striking and visible results. Suppose that, on some afternoon of the week you see these ladies, young and old, married and unmarried, assembling from all directions. You inquire the cause. The answer is, these are our christian ladies. They are assembling to unite in social prayer for their unconverted husbands, fathers, brothers, sons. Suppose that when these husbands or fathers return to their homes, harrassed and worn down with the cares and labors of their business, they find the ordinary duties of the house neglected, domestics unfaithful, child-

ren out of temper, and every thing in confusion, and, when they inquire for her, who should guide the house, are told that she is gone to the prayer meeting, where ladies unite in praying for their unconverted friends and relatives. Suppose, still further, that when these ladies return, it is with hearts overflowing with zeal, inflamed by the exercises in which they have just taken part and address themselves at once to those for whom they have been praying in direct and earnest exhortation. What, suppose you, would be the effect of these direct efforts? Would they be productive of good results? Most surely not. And yet, in all this, the ladies may have been actuated by pure motives, and may have been aiming at important objects. But, by not pursuing the right course, by stepping aside from their appropriate duties, and attempting open and direct efforts—they would fail to accomplish the good which they otherwise might have accomplished. And you thus see how it is, that I suppose a cheerful discharge of appropriate duties will do more for the regeneration of the community than any open and direct efforts.

I have pointed out what I regard as the proper sphere of female influence, retired from public view, in cheerful employments of domestic and social life. But why, you will ask do I regard private and social life as the peculiar and appropriate sphere of woman? To this question I have two answers to give, for this opinion I have two reasons to assign. But before stating these reasons, it is necessary to make two or three preliminary remarks. And first, I would remark, that individual cases are to be estimated by a reference to general principles. What it is right and proper for one lady to do, it is right for all ladies similarly situated to do. If one lady, under peculiar impressions, may go forth as a public herald, every other lady, under the same impressions, may go forth in the same way, unless some peculiarity in their situations should point out a different course of duty. When we read that Mrs. ——addressed an assembly, we learn that she may be a wife. It may be too, that she is a mother. If so, she has then duties to perform as a wife or a mother, these duties she must neglect while ad-

dressing this public assembly. When we read that Miss —— addressed a public assembly, we know that she is a daughter. It may be that she is a sister. If so, she has duties as a daughter or a sister, which she must and does neglect while addressing the public assembly. If it is right that these individuals should pursue this course, it is right that every other wife, mother, daughter or sister, under the same impressions, and in the same circumstances, should pursue the same course. Now we may not think it of much importance if a solitary lady, here and there, pursues these courses. But should we not be startled at the thought, that the whole face of society is to be changed, and, that the majority of ladies are to step forward in this way? Would it be right, would it be proper? Does the lady say she has a special call from God? Let her make it appear. The call is generally an impression upon her own mind. It may be a delusion. There is no evidence that it is from God which she can set before others. Every one else, who may fancy she has a call, may go forth. Does the lady say that the

duties which she neglects are performed by some one else? It may be so. But this does not relieve her of her responsibility. It was her *duty* to perform them or to see to their performance, for they were, upon the supposition, her duties. Does the lady say, as I have heard a mother say, that she can perform her duties to her children and her family and still have time to devote to other and more distant public matters? I answer, that she is a wonderful woman, that, in my intercourse with society, I have seldom found a mother, who had any thing like a true conception of the vast responsibilities connected with the charge of a single child, of the solemn nature of the duty of training up a single immortal spirit, as it should be trained, for this world and for the spiritual and eternal world. I fear, therefore, that the person who would make such a remark, has never thought or felt as she should think and feel in regard to the trust committed to her, the responsibilities imposed upon her.

Does the individual say, I feel a responsibility in regard to these great and important

interests ? I would ask if God has imposed that responsibility upon her in particular ?—if there are not other responsibilities nearer home, which she is neglecting—and in regard to which there can be no doubt that God imposed them upon her in particular ? Does the individual point to female scripture characters, as cases where females were called to step forward before the public ? I answer that in such cases, there were circumstances in providence which marked out these cases to the community, as exceptions to the general course of female duty. If any of you then, young ladies, feel prompted to step forth before the public, remember that you are doing all in your power to introduce such practices into general vogue among the female portion of the community.

I would remark, in the second place, that the question is not, what ladies have a right to do, but what it is right for them to do. Ladies have a right to speak in public. There is no law of the land to prevent them. But is it right, proper and expedient, that they

should do this—and that all should do this ? This is the question.

I remark, in the third place, that ladies, who take this course, must be willing to abide by its natural consequences. Ladies expect to be treated by gentlemen with polite attentions, and a gallant delicacy, differently from the way in which men treat each other. How often is the expression of wonder heard, from the lips of females, that one could so treat a *lady*. But, if the lady comes forward into the arena of debate, into the noisy bustle and busy stir of public affairs and transactions, she must expect to meet with the same treatment, which, under the same circumstances, she would meet with, were she not a lady. It is an old saying, 'if you play with boys you must take boys play.' So, if ladies mingle with men in public, they must take the same treatment which men render to each other. They must be willing to forego all polite and delicate attentions. They must be willing to abide by the natural consequences of the course they choose to pursue. I have thus stated certain general principles, which may aid you in determin-

ing the question as to your duty in this respect.

I will now state my reasons for believing that private and domestic life, is the peculiar and appropriate sphere of female duty and female influence. These reason, I have said, were two ; the one is drawn from the very nature of the case, the other from the instructions of God's word.

And first, from the nature of the case. In all civilized society, the duties and efforts of the community are divided into two distinct classes. There are the hard labors of life and the anxious cares of business on the one hand, and the regulation of the private, household, domestic concerns on the other. Does a family remove to the western wilds, there is the same division. There is the felling of trees and the clearing of land, on the one hand, there is the preparation of food, the making and keeping in order apparel, the training and watching of children on the other. So, in our cities, there is the same distinction. The anxieties and cares of business on the one hand, the regulation of household duties

and domestic labors on the other. It is important that both these classes of duties should be well and intelligibly performed. If either are neglected, society must suffer. If the labors abroad and the cares of business are neglected, the community will suffer want. If the affairs within, of families and of households be neglected the comfort and happiness of individuals and of families will be much diminished. Now what division of labors shall there be, to correspond with this distinction, which every where exists? Will females go forth to all the labors and anxieties of business? Will they plough our fields, enter our workshops and our counting houses, or sail our vessels? And shall the men remain within, rocking the cradle, tending the sick, or wielding the implements of cookery?—This, you all see, would be absurd. But if the man must engage in, and carry on all these important and wide spread transactions of business, he also must attend to all political movement, and all law making and law administering wants of the community, and all public efforts of every kind. Because all these

are connected more directly with the interests of business and not with the domestic cares of social life. The currency question for example has reference to the business interests of the community and affects social and moral interests, through the instrumentality of these business interests. So the annexation of Texas to the Union, a subject upon which ladies have petitioned, is a political question, having primary and special reference to the political relations of the country. There would, then, be just as much propriety, in our ladies circulating petitions for or against a national bank, as for or against the annexation of Texas. True, it is said that this involves, to a great degree, interest of a moral nature. And what question of public, political action does not involve moral consequences? I say, then, that from the very nature of the case, I draw the conclusion that public labors of legislation, business or philanthropy, do not fall within the appropriate sphere of woman. The steps from which the conclusion is drawn, are these. There is, and from the very nature of the case, there must be two distinct

classes of duties. One of these, females cannot, from their very physical constitution, perform, and with this class of duties are intimately connected all public movements whether of a political, religious or philanthropic character. therefore, from the very nature of the case, all public efforts of this character, are inappropriate to woman. Woman, as I have already said, has influence, but she is to exert that influence by remaining within her appropriate sphere. If she steps aside from this, she forgoes the opportunity of certain usefulness, in the proper discharge of her duties, and enters a field, where it is altogether problematical, whether the results of her efforts will be good or evil to the community, while the effects upon her own character, upon her retiring modesty and feminine delicacy, which are so becoming in woman, are any thing but good.

But what, you may ask, does christianity teach upon this subject? In seeking an answer to this question, let us first look at some facts in the gospel history. When our Saviour was upon earth, there were among the crowds

who flocked to hear his words, many females. They become interested in him and in his instructions. He became interested in them. He taught females, as well as others, the doctrines and principles of his religion, and found them soon becoming wholly absorbed in the contemplation of its truths, and wholly devoted to its influence. Do you suppose that among all his followers, he found one more absorbed, more devoted than was Mary the sister of Lazarus? I presume not. But notwithstanding our Saviour was surrounded, as it were, with females, was deeply interested in them, imparted to them religious instruction and found them devoted to his religion notwithstanding, I say all this, he did not choose one female to be of the number of his apostles. Nor was this for the want of mental improvement on the part of the females. For they, surely, were as well qualified, in this respect as the humble fisherman, whom he chose. But he did not call one female from the quiet scenes of her home, and send her forth to proclaim the gospel, either in public assemblies, or from house to house. And may we not

fairly conclude, that the reason was, that he did not regard these as coming within the appropriate sphere of female efforts. Suppose then, our Saviour were now on earth, the herald of any of the specific philanthropic movements of the day. He would undoubtedly be surrounded by females, would be interested in them, would instruct them in his principles and views, and would find them zealous friends of these views. But, if guided by the same principles, which were manifested in his conduct, when he was on earth, he would not call one female from the quiet of her home, to send her forth as a herald of these movements either in public or from house to house. Young ladies, let the fact, which I have here brought before you, have its proper influence upon your feelings. Christ is interested in you, his religion has bestowed great favors upon you, and he asks of you an entire devotion of affections of energies and influence to his cause. But he does not ask, he never has, asked you to leave your appropriate spheres of duty, and go forth as heralds and apostles of truth and goodness.

But here you will tell me that Paul often sends salutations to females, who are his fellow laborers, his helpers in the gospel. This is true. Paul had his fellow laborers, even among females. But here another question arises.—Were they fellow laborers, because they performed the same kind of labor which the apostle was performing, or because, in their appropriate sphere, they were laboring for the same great purposes? That we may know something of Paul's ideas as to the appropriate sphere of female effort, I will quote a few of his injunctions upon this point. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 14: 34, 35, we read, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak. But they are commanded to be under obedience, as saith the law,' and, if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for a woman to speak in church.—1st Timothy, 2d chap, 11th and 12th. Let the woman bear in silence, in all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 1st Tim. 2: 13, 14. And withall,

they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idlers, but tattlers also, and busy bodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will, therefore, that the younger women marry—guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. Titus 2. 3, 4, 5.—The aged women, likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to mad wine, teachers of good things, that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, *keepers at home*, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. I have quoted these expressions as bearing directly upon the general subject of present inquiry, the proper sphere of female effort and influence. And from these expressions we may learn the apostle's views upon the subject, and may form some estimate of what kind of assistance he received from his female fellow laborers in Christ.

And may we not, from all that has been said, draw the following conclusions, that the proper sphere of female influence is away from the bustle and stir of business, of public life, and noisy strife; that it is in the retired and quiet scenes of domestic life, or in the more extended circle of social effort. And that the way in which her influence can be made most salutary as well as most powerful, is, by a cheerful performance of appropriate duties, rather than by direct and open effort.

I have thus far endeavored to guard you against some strange notions and practices of modern times, and, in this way, to point out what I deem correct views upon the proper sphere and appropriate manner of female influence.

I am now to point out somewhat more in detail, the particular ways, in which you may do good, may become fellow laborers with all who are striving for the good of man. Here then, you are a young lady, a daughter, a sister, you are deeply interested in all that is good, and desirous of doing all the good

in your power. You are interested in religion, and ask in what way you may interest your parents and your brothers? Here, then, is a definite question. I will endeavor to give an intelligible answer. But you will remember the principle I have laid down, that you are to seek to exert influence by a cheerful discharge of appropriate duties, rather than by direct efforts. Let your interest in religion make you a better daughter, and better sister. And what I mean by this is, let it make you less selfish, and more devoted to the happiness of your parents and brothers. Here is the point where we all fail, we carry our selfishness into our religion. Have you been wild and gay, seeking for enjoyment in balls and assemblies, unwilling to forego the pleasure to be derived from these, that you may promote the happiness of father or brother? And are you now deeply interested in religion, but equally unwilling to forego the pleasures of attending upon religious exercises, that so you may promote the happiness of father or mother? If this be the case,

you cannot expect that your father or brother should respect your change. To them you do not seem to be a new creature, you seem only to have altered in your tastes. You are just as earnest in seeking selfish gratifications as before, only from this alteration in your tastes, you seek it from a different source. But, if your father or your brother, perceives that your religion makes you less selfish, more willing to give up your own enjoyments, in order to promote theirs, then will they regard it as a reality.

You are then, in the first place, to let your religion make you a better daughter, a better sister, less selfish, more willing to give up your enjoyments, even your religious enjoyments, for their good than others. You are not merely to render pleasantly whatever services may be asked for, but you are to cherish a lively interest in every thing which concerns their good and to endeavor to anticipate their wants and desires. If your father or your brother see you thus changed from a selfish devotee of pleasure to an ear-

nest devotion to the good of all within the sphere of your sympathies and influence, everwilling to give up the gratification of your own wishes, to promote the happiness of others, ever cherishing a lively sympathy in the welfare of others, and ever doing all in your power to anticipate their wishes, and prevent their sufferings. If, I say, your father and your brother see such a change, then will they respect the religion you love. You see that your first effort to interest your parents and brothers in religion exerts its holiest influences over your own hearts and lives, in making you better daughters and sisters. Do you ask if this is all that you can do? Most certainly not. You may, you are in duty bound to pray for these, and your own feelings will prompt you to a faithful and fervent performance of this duty. But let these be your private prayers, let your anxieties for those who are near and dear to you, be whispered not to the ears of your fellow creatures, but into the ear of Him who seeth in secret, but who will reward openly. Then, too, you

should avoid the course which some take, of retiring from the society of those you would influence. Make yourselves more agreeable than before, in all the endearing fondness of your devotion to their happiness. When you speak to them upon the subject of religion, speak with openness, with frankness, but in much kind love. If you wish them to read the books, which have deeply affected your own heart, hand them the book openly and kindly. Their respect for you, for your great change, and manifest improvement, will secure you a kind and attentive perusal of these books. But if you place these books in their way, as it were by stealth, your apparent want of confidence will excite improper feelings, and will prevent them from reading, it may fill their hearts with bitterness, and bring upon you severe reproaches.

Still further, there may be cases in which you wish to caution an acquaintance, and you propose to write an anonymous note to the individual. I would counsel you not to do this. I have seen this done in some instan-

ces and never with a good result. It often produces great mischief, and causes great trouble in society. If your acquaintance with the individual be sufficiently intimate, to warrant such an effort, speak openly and directly but at the same time kindly and affectionately upon the subject. Or, if you prefer writing as giving you an opportunity to be more full and explicit, then I say write. But do it openly. Sign your own name. I have been called to duties of this kind frequently, and in no instance has offence been taken. Although what you may write, may exert no influence, still respect for your honesty and good wishes, will prevent the individual from taking offence. Be ever open, then, and direct and speak in your own name. If your acquaintance with the individual be not sufficiently intimate to warrant this, then you are not the person to do it. You must speak to some one else, who is more intimately acquainted.

But still farther, are you desirous, as every virtuous young lady will be, to exert an

influence upon society around you, to prevent the prevalence of dissipation and licentiousness? And do you ask what you are to do to accomplish this? I answer, first—elevate your own characters, in all that is pure and noble and worthy, in intellectual improvement, and moral refinement. Let your characters for intelligence, for rational and sober conversation, for moral refinement and purity, be such, that all may find your society improving, in its influences upon them, that all when they leave your company, may be filled with heartfelt respect for you and may desire again to enjoy your conversation. It is here, I believe, that many young ladies fail. They lay up no store of useful knowledge they do not cultivate their moral powers, and our young men are compelled to say, we see but little difference between the intellectual and moral improvement of these, the virtuous, and of those who are abandoned. We find as much frivolity and vanity, in the one class, as in the other. In acquiring a public education, one has an opportu-

nity of studying human nature in all the varieties of human character, and especially has he an opportunity of learning the feelings which precede action, which lie at the foundation of worth and usefulness, or are the seeds of future dissipation and misery. And in these scenes, my own observation has taught me, that one of the strongest safeguards by which a young man can be protected, is that of deep and heartfelt respect and sincere esteem for the worth of female character.— With those who have always associated with young ladies of sterling worth, and who have acquired a fondness for the society of such, the thoughts of dissipation and licentiousness fill the soul with horror. On the other hand, one of the first steps toward licentiousness is a contempt for female character. Let a young man of mind, always meet with the vain and the frivolous among young ladies, and he learns to look upon them, not as intelligent and moral beings, not as equals and companions, whose society may improve him, but as play things. When in their presence

she lays aside all reasonable conversation and adapts himself to what he may consider their capacities and tastes. And it is but a step from regarding them as toys for an hour's amusement, to regard them as created merely for the gratification of passion. I say, then, that would you exert an influence in promoting the moral improvement and moral reformation of society, improve yourselves, in all that is pure and good. Seek to store your minds with useful knowledge, to exercise your mental powers upon the knowledge which you do acquire. Let your standard of intelligence, of moral and social worth be high. Make yourselves worthy of respect and esteem. This, I can assure you, will, of itself, do more for the moral reformation of the community, than all female moral reform societies, than all ferretting out and exposing the peccadilios of your fellow creatures, than all railing and exclusion.

In the second place, I remark, that in your intercourse with society, you should endeavor to show that you respect worth of

character, and are not carried away by the mere fascination of manners. Let me illustrate what I mean. I have known respectable and virtuous young ladies occupy themselves, in a social party, in ridiculing, among themselves a young man of sterling worth, who, from not having been much in society, was somewhat awkward in his manners, while they would be all smiles and all attention to one of known, or strongly suspected dissipated habits, whose manners were graceful. And I have sometimes felt that those young men, who, by an intercourse with the outcast of your own sex, have acquired a sort of don't care ease of manners, were generally received with more favor, than those of the greatest worth, whose manners were awkward. I trust that this is not generally the case, but I know that sometimes it is so. And what is the consequence? The feeling grows up, that in order to acquire those manners which are necessary as a passport in female society, one must mingle in that which is vicious. Dissident young men of worth

are driven from your society, and the profligate and abandoned are encouraged in their course. These things ought not so to be. You ought to show that you respect worth of character, and are not to be carried away by that don't care ease of manners, that modest as it is sometimes called, assurance, I had almost said, that cool imprudence, with which young ladies are sometimes pleased. I do not say in what way you are to manifest this regard for worth of character. Because I suppose, different persons, according to their different temperaments and habits, will manifest this in different ways. But I do not say that in some way, you must make your regard for real worth of character seen and felt.

Still further, you, young ladies, I had almost said, preside over the social amusements of the community. If you are willing to stoop to low and silly plays, these will be the order of social amusements. If you are given to balls and amusements of this character, the character of the community will

take its coloring from your feelings. It is for you to say in a great degree, what shall be the character of the amusements of society. That is, you can control these things, provided you will manifest an interest in some sort of amusements. The young will have amusements, and young men will have recreations. If young ladies withhold their countenance altogether from amusements of every kind, the only consequence will be, that young men will resort to those which are low and degrading. But if the more intelligent portion of the female community will take the lead and manifest an interest in those amusements which are of a pure and heart-felt and elevating character, then will the young men be prevented from low and base indulgences. At least those whose pure feelings and healthy tastes have not been perverted, may be saved. You can by your free and social intercourse with your brother's friends and acquaintances, by your music, if blest with a musical talent, you can make their visits to your father's house pleas-

ant. Perhaps you may in this manner, do something to promote those social and domestic habits and feelings which are so important to the safety of the young. I would therefore urge you who are daughters and sisters to lend your influence by doing all in your power to make your home pleasant to those who may visit there, by doing all in your power to raise the tone of conversation, to give freedom and ease to social intercourse, and to introduce those social and domestic pleasures, which may take the place of others which are injurious in their nature and tendency.

I have thus pointed out some of the ways, in which you may labor for the moral reform of the community, by elevating and improving your own character, by shewing, in some marked manner, that you respect moral and intrinsic worth of character, and are not captivated by mere gracefulness of manner, when all is hollow beneath, and by doing all in your power to introduce amusements of a pure and healthful character. In these ways you may

do something, you may do much towards the moral reformation and improvement of society. I do not indeed suppose that, here or any where else, the particular influence of individual females will be visible and striking. But I do believe that a silent influence will go forth elevating the tone and character of female intercourse, and that this influence, though silent, will be felt throughout the community.

But you ask, what shall we do about joining these female moral reform societies? In answer to your question, I would speak distinctly, and say have nothing to do with them. But why, you ask, do I object? I answer, that the principles and the modes of operation in these societies, I believe to be unsound. What are these principles? I will name one, and that is, that safety is to be found in an exposure of the vice, a familiarity with all its haunts and avenues and manifestations. This principle, I believe to be unsound. I believe that a young lady's safety consists in ignorance of these evil ways, when it is accompanied, as it usually and naturally is with that native

and shrinking delicacy, which causes her to draw back, as if with instinctive horror, from the very appearance of evil, from every word, look or allusion which may seem to partake in the least possible degree of the vice. This is my theoretical conclusion. It is confirmed by the statements of an article, which appeared, sometime since in the New York Literary and Theological Review, an able Journal. The writer of the article, who professed to have enjoyed opportunities for judging, asserts that this course of publicly exposing or advertising these haunts of iniquity, has actually, in the experiment, tended to increase and extend the evil in question. And, indeed we need not have gone to these statements for this information. For, when I have looked at the papers issued by the New York Female Moral Reform Society, I have felt that the young lady who could take pleasure in reading those papers, must have lost much of her native and instinctive delicacy of feeling, while the dissipated young man, who should look into them, might mistake

them for the heralds of licentiousness, serving as a directory in regard to its haunts, and setting forth such pictorial descriptions, as might be supposed to be the excitements to indulgence. I might, my friends, give other reasons. But have I not said enough? I respect the pure motives, and the holy desires of those who engage in these efforts.— But I must dissent from their judgment, and dissenting as I do, I must, in faithfulness to my office, counsel my friends to have nothing to do with these Female Moral Reform Societies.

And what shall we do, you ask, in regard to Temperance and Temperance Societies? I answer, that the evils of Intemperance have formerly, and in many cases, originated with females. Mothers and nurses have drugged the helpless infant with alcoholic drinks, until without doubt, the foundation has been laid for future intemperance. Then too, females, young ladies even, have done much in former times by giving their countenance to the drinking of pledges with their friends, to pro-

mote the cause of intemperance. In these and in other ways females have been lending their influence to the advancement of intemperance. Since such is the case, it is important that they should make themselves acquainted with the subject, and should take an open and active part in this reformation. But here, as in regard to every other effort, let their exertions be, not those of public lectures, nor even of active visitants from house to house, but in the appropriate discharge of the duties of their own sphere. Is any one of you, young ladies, about to give a party? Here, without stepping beyond your proper sphere, you can exert an influence, you can say this my party, and this the entertainment for my friends, shall not be polluted by intoxicating drinks. And, by so doing you will accomplish two things, you will wipe your own hands from all participation in the evil, even should some, whose appetites are craving, go from your party to places of indulgence. And in the second place, you will do something, in this way, to change the fash-

ions of society in this respect. And after all, this evil is more the result of fashion than any thing else. A lady who is a friend to temperance, brings forward wine, not because she wishes to do it, or wishes to partake herself, but because such is the fashion, her neighbors and acquaintances do so, and she wishes to treat them as well as they treat her. And when wine is brought forward, many drink not because they wish to drink, but because such is the fashion. You can then do something, towards changing the fashions, by discarding wine from your own parties.

But, it may be, that you will say, that you see no impropriety in offering wine, provided other drinks, as water or lemonade, are offered too. I will not contend about what may seem unimportant, I will only say that, with the views which I now entertain, I could not offer wine to a social company. Still every man is master of his own house, and every lady must preside at her own entertainment. It is a question for each individual to settle on his or her own responsibility. And it be-

comes every individual to be well assured in the course which may be pursued. But I would insist upon it, that the same politeness, which would prompt you, out of regard to past practices and old prejudices, to bring forward wine, should, out of regard to the conscientious scruples and new prejudices of many, prompt you to bring forward other and safer drinks.

Then, when you attend the social parties of your friends, you can resolutely decline the proffered glass of wine. And, when among your young companions and acquaintances of the other sex, you can speak decidedly against the practice, and express your strong disapprobation of the evil, in every form, shape or degree. In these, and in a great variety of other similar ways, you may, without overstepping the modesty of your nature, do much for the promotion of temperance. Do you ask still farther in regard to joining temperance societies? I answer that these societies in many respects, differ from Moral Reform Societies. They refer not to practices which

are shut out from respectable society, but to those which are fashionable. Not to the practices of others but to your own. It may be inexpedient and improper for individuals to associate together to reform their neighbors, while at the same time it may be expedient and proper to associate together, for the reformation of their own practices. It may be inexpedient to ferret out and bring to light all the arts and avenues of a species of iniquity of which they know nothing, and the very knowledge of which is dangerous, while at the same time it may be proper to investigate and expose the secret approaches, the debasing nature and the fatal consequences of any practice or habit to which they are themselves subjected, and of the nature and influence of which they are ignorant. There is, therefore, as I conceive, no impropriety in the formation of female temperance societies. And there have been times—there may now be places where these are all important—in order that the ladies may strengthen each other's hands, and encourage each other's hearts

—that by combination and associated effort, the fashions of female society may be changed. But I have learned to look at things, rather than at names and forms, and to feel the importance of correct principles rather than any particular modes of manifesting and avowing those principles. For I have found that generally where correct principles are embraced, they will manifest themselves in some way, and generally if accompanied by good sense and sound discretion, they will manifest themselves in the way best adapted to the peculiar circumstances of the individual. While, therefore, I would earnestly entreat every young lady who may read these pages, to be open, decided and uncompromising in her opposition to every form, shape or avenue of intemperance, I would say in regard to joining a temperance society, act just as in the exercise of a sound judgment, you may at the time think best.

Do you ask what you shall do about signing petitions to the legislative authorities in regard to laws upon the subject? I answer that I think this a peculiar subject and one

very different from others, upon which petitions have been presented. You petition in this case for the removal of evils, and the sources of evil which relate directly, to yourselves—to your social condition and to your individual happiness. Your fathers, or brothers may be intemperate, and may in their intemperance abuse you. Here are visible, palpable evils and injuries from exposure to which you ask to be relieved. These are evils and injuries of which the laws take cognizance. The sources of these evils are open and known. They are kept open and made known by the power of existing laws. I see then, no impropriety in asking the law making authorities to relieve you from your evils, from your exposure to these evils, to close the sources of evil, which, with the best intentions they have already undertaken to regulate. I say then, there is no impropriety in signing petitions on this subject. I have some doubts regard to the expediency of so doing. This a subject, upon which the most powerful gáds in the community are awakened, in re-

gard to which they are thinking and contriving what may be the best to be done. Unless therefore, you can throw new light before such minds, I know not that much good will result from such petitions. Still further, it depends on public opinion whether whatever laws may be enacted upon the subject shall be enforced. But public opinion in this case means the opinions of the male portions of the community, those on whom it falls to carry forward and execute the laws of the land. Should there be change of laws in compliance with the petitions of ladies, it might be that public opinion in the sense here used would not sustain the charge. I have therefore doubted whether much good could result from these petitions and have felt that, perhaps it might be better for ladies not to turn their attention so much to these, but to direct it more entirely to their own private and social influence in their appropriate circle.

Do you ask what you shall do in regard to the question of slavery, and abolition societies? I answer, that I conceive the question

of slavery to be one of the most important questions of the day, a question, which requires great care in the examination, and great caution in drawing conclusions, I conceive it to be important that all young ladies, who have the opportunity, should make themselves acquainted with this question, and should endeavor to understand it, in its various bearings. This I say is a proper and important subject of reading, thought and inquiry. Like all other important moral questions, the examination of this, will promote your own intellectual and moral improvement. You will, as you examine, read and reflect, find the various principles of moral duty becoming more clearly defined to your own minds. You will find, too, that this exercise of your mental powers will increase your strength of mind, and will give you a power to grasp and comprehend difficult and important subjects of moral duty, while you will be acquiring a power to weigh and balance probabilities, a power of nice discrimination in regard to things which appear to be alike, but

which are in reality widely different. And, when young ladies have once made up their minds upon this subject, I conceive it to be proper for them, within their appropriate sphere to express their opinions, and to do what may be in their power, to aid others to form a right judgement, while, at the same time, the mind should be kept open to further light, come from what source it may. Thus far I would have ladies go in regard to this question. But I would not have them take an active part in forming abolition societies and presenting abolition petitions.

Do you ask me the reason for this opinion? I answer that abolition societies are not like temperance societies, formed for the purpose of correcting evils among yourselves. They relate to the practices of others and those at a distance from you. Suppose the ladies of the south, should form associations for the purpose of embodying and expressing their decided disapprobation of some of your own practices.

Would you expect any good results? Most

surely not. I am aware it is said that the state of opinion and feeling upon this subject, are wrong even at the north. They may be so. But there is a very great difference between the reformation of fashions and the change of opinions. If fashions are to be changed, it requires the combination either tacitly or distinctly formed of sufficient numbers to give a sanction to new fashions. But if opinions are to be changed, there should be calm argument and conclusive reasoning. A lady may with propriety discard alcoholic drinks from her entertainments, because the fashions of society no longer require them,—because the majority of those with whom she associates, no longer introduce them. But no lady of mind and reflection, will change her opinions upon a question like that of slavery, unless she is herself convinced that they are wrong. She will not, she ought not to change them, because it is becoming fashionable to be on the other side. She will not, she ought not to change them, if every lady of her acquaintance has changed them, unless

she is herself convinced. It is for this reason that I have said, examine the subject carefully and calmly, each one of you for yourselves. Make up your own minds deliberately, without regard to the opinions of others—but upon your responsibility to your conscience and your God. It is for this reason that I have said, exert your influence in favor of your views, decidedly and consistently, in your appropriate sphere. You ought not to wish others to be influenced in any way differently from that in which you have been influenced. You ought not to wish them to change their opinions because you have changed yours, unless their minds are convinced and satisfied, by the reasons which have convinced and satisfied yours.— And therefore your proper course should be to converse and reason upon the subject, to write upon it for the public, if you are qualified and have time, to present facts and arguments.

It is for the reason above stated, that I would not have you unite in forming societies

merely for the purpose of making one opinion more fashionable than another. On the whole then, I should much question the propriety of female abolition societies. Ladies have a right to form such societies, but I should question whether it be right and proper for them to do so. I should think they might by pursuing a different course, exert a more powerful and a more salutary influence, even in favor of the very cause which they have espoused.

And then as to petitions for the abolition of slavery, you do not, in these petitions, throw any new light upon the subject. You only make known your own urgent desires upon the subject. But it is a subject which involves great difficulties. Those who are called to legislate, are bound to examine these difficulties. They are in duty bound not to legislate, until they can see their way clear to do it without producing more hurt than good, until they are satisfied in their own minds, upon the subject. Should they, out of regard to your petitions, legislate, and so involve the

country in difficulty, they could not call upon you, upon the ladies, to extricate the country from that difficulty. I place myself, in imagination, in the situation of an honest and conscientious legislator. I receive petitions from the ladies of the district I represent. These petitions contain no new arguments, no new light. They only make known to me the opinions and feelings of these ladies, and it may be their feverish anxiety that something should be done. I feel disposed to do all in my power to comply with their petitions. But from the position in which I am placed, I am compelled to look at the subject from a different point of view from what they have. And I can see no way of accomplishing the object without involving the country in great evils. What then, as an honest and conscientious man, must I do? You cannot wish me to act contrary to my own convictions. And what good therefore, have your petitions done? I should say then, here as before, exert your influence by endeavoring to spread right views, and excite right feelings upon

the subject in those around you. And pray that these right views and feelings may prevail. But refrain from these petitions.

I have thus, my friends, spoken plainly and distinctly in regard to some of the great agitating questions of the present day—and I would commend my suggestions to your careful consideration.

But there are other opportunities for female influence yet to be noticed. There is, perhaps, no one place, where females can do more good, than by their kind attentions to the sick, the poor and the suffering. Every one, who has been prostrated upon a bed of sickness, can tell of the soothing influence of female attendance. There is a softness and a delicacy in their attentions, peculiarly soothing to the pains, and the nervousness of a sick bed, which man, from his rougher habits, does not usually acquire. I know that some ladies either affect a nervousness which unfits them for these duties, or are really incapacitated, from their peculiar temperament, for enduring the sight of suffering. If this is af-

fect, it should be at once banished, as unworthy of a rational and intelligent soul. If it is natural and real, it should be struggled against and overcome. I would then urge upon all young ladies to avail themselves of all opportunities, which are not inconsistent with other and more immediate, or more pressing duties, to become ministering angels of mercy to the sick and the suffering.—Wherever it can be done, visiting the poor is an appropriate way of female influence. Females can, more readily than men, enter into the feelings, and secure the confidence of the poor. The poor will more readily lay open their wants to ladies than gentlemen, and the attentions of ladies are more winning. If time and other circumstances will permit their employing themselves in making garments for the poor, it is highly proper that they should do so. We find that Dorcas is spoken of in the scriptures, in terms of approbation, because she had employed herself in this way. And, the forming of associations for purposes like this, may be well.

It is not a combination for the removal of public evils, it is an association to promote strength and efficiency, and to secure wisdom and counsel in the alleviation of social evils and domestic wretchedness. And you will remember the social and the domestic are the appropriate spheres of woman's influence.

Still further, the education of the young, especially in its earliest stages, is, usually, and probably ever will be, committed to females. It is to the care of the mother, that the earliest training of the child is first committed. An elder daughter and sister may qualify herself for the assistance of the mother and may do much, by a kind influence, to allay the passions, to form the dispositions to guide the inquiries of younger brothers and sisters. So too, any young lady, who may be residing in the family, where there are children, while she should not counteract or thwart the plans of parents, even if they may seem to her defective, or decline her aid in carrying them forward, may, by falling in with them do much good. And by free conversa-

tion with parents, when the children are not present, she may do much to enlighten their minds, and improve and elevate their plans, provided she has herself read, and reflected upon the subject. In addition to all these quiet and unobtrusive modes of influence, there are thousands of young ladies wanted to supply the vacancies in our earlier schools. And while these open an honorable way of support, they also present opportunities for the exertion of a powerful influence for good. She who avails herself of them, may be sustained by the thought that she is acting within her appropriate sphere.

Finally, there is the Sunday School. In that, a way is opened for females to exert a vast amount of influence. Just look at this sphere. Here are your children assembled around you for a time, longer or shorter; each week you have their uninterrupted time, and, if successful, you may secure their undivided attention to what? to the highest and the noblest subjects of thought: you converse with them freely about the holiest themes, about

God and the Saviour, and about religion and happiness. You can thus guide their energies, excite and direct aright their childish curiosity. You can impart knowledge, you can impress good principles. Oh, it is a glorious field of influence. Nor is it so limited as you may suppose. Should the number of teachers in our Sunday Schools increase until there are not more than one or two scholars to a teacher, it would be a happy sight, provided the teachers all possessed the right spirit. The instruction may be more particular, the conversation more free, the attachment more strong and the influence more connected and powerful. Would that every young lady might find it convenient, and might feel disposed to enter upon this field of influence. But if it is a field of influence, it is also a station involving responsibility. And while I could wish that every young lady might find it convenient, and might feel disposed to engage in this work, I would say, let no young lady engage in it unless she has a love for spiritual things, a desire to do good, a wish to

understand, and to walk according to the great truths which she is to teach, unless she is willing to forego some gratifications that she may attend to her duties, that she may be present at the meetings of teachers, and pursue the studies of her exercises. For, if she engages without these feelings, the task will be irksome, and her influence upon her class will be deleterious. This is a mode of influence, which is to occupy more than the allotted time of school on the Sabbath, by the reading and study which it requires, by the meetings of teachers for social and mutual improvement, by the occasional visits to pupils, which are important, it may well engross much thought and occupy much leisure time. And, the time thus spent, is profitably spent, even in reference to one's own personal improvement. I have thus, youngladies, pointed out various ways in which you can devote your energies to the advancement of truth and goodness.

And now, what is the sum of the whole matter? The proper sphere of female influ-

ence is in private, in domestic scenes and social intercourse. The proper way of exerting female influence is, by the cheerful and faithful discharge of appropriate duties, rather than by direct efforts in public movements, aimed to produce visible and striking results. These are the principles which I have laid down. I have endeavored to show their justness, to carry them out and apply them to some of the agitating questions of the day. I have also endeavored to point out ways in which you may do good, in accordance with these principles. I believe, as I have said before, that woman can exert a powerful influence for good, if she will confine her efforts to her appropriate sphere. But, if she steps aside from this, she outrages the general sense of the community, excites disgust, and loses the influence which she might otherwise have exerted.

ADDITIONAL LETTERS.

No. I.

Young ladies urged to prepare while young for future self support—This urged on the ground of the liability to a change of pecuniary circumstances—on the ground of the independance which it will give in fact and in feeling—and on the ground of the good moral influence which such an effort will exert upon the character—young ladies are not advised to learn trades, but to make themselves acquainted with the whole round of ordinary domestic female labors—to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with all branches of study to which they may attend, and with all the accomplishments which they may acquire so as to be able to teach.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS.:

Since the first edition of the Young Lady's Aid was published, I have wished that I had addressed you upon two separate topics, not there distinctly dwelt upon. The printing of a second edition affords me the desired opportunity, of which I gladly avail myself. And first, I wish to urge upon you the importance

of making distinct and careful preparation, now while you are young, to support yourselves, by your own efforts, should you be compelled, by any emergency in after life, so to do. This, some will perhaps say, is a topic, which it is extremely important should be urged upon the attention of some of those, for example, who are born in poverty, or in moderate circumstances, and who may be compelled, by their very situation, to depend upon their own efforts for a support. But it is a strange topic, you may think, to urge upon the attention of the daughters of the wealthy of our land. And yet to me it seems important that this subject should be urged upon the attention of every young lady, and especially upon the attention of those who are born and reared in the mansions of the rich. For it is by them that it will in all probability be overlooked or neglected, while those in more moderate and straitened circumstances will have the subject urged upon their attention by their very situation.

In this country, there is no stability to property. It is ever fluctuating, like the waves of the troubled sea. Families, that are one day rolling in wealth, are the next plunged to the very depths of poverty.—Your father may now be worth his thousands or his hundreds of thousands, and may be able to maintain you in idleness, or in the neglect of all useful employments, and to furnish you with every possible indulgence. But though such may be his condition to-day, yet you know not how soon he may meet with a reverse of fortune. Others, who were once as rich and who thought themselves as safe as he can be, are now among the poorest of the poor. His mountain stands no firmer than did theirs. His riches may, as theirs have already done, take to themselves wings and fly away. Should this be the case, what will be your condition if destitute of the means of self-support? You will become a burden upon your friends, and, if possessed of any sensibility of heart, you will be most wretched in yourself. Instead of being able to cheer and

relieve your parents by your efforts, you will only add tenfold to their misery by the spectacle which you present, of one wretched in yourself and useless too, or perhaps a burden upon others. Will not the very thought of this possible contingency, rendered vivid and controlling by your affection for your parents, prompt you to secure, now while you are young, the power and the means of self-support? Again, should you become connected, in the holy bonds of matrimony, with an intelligent and industrious man of business, who has already secured a competency, and who is pressing resolutely forward to the attainment of wealth, still you know the risks and hazards of business. How often are our most active and enterprising men disappointed in their plans, and expectations? How often are they brought into perplexing and tempting embarrassments? Suppose that, under such circumstances, he sees in you, the wife of his love, one without the power or means of self-support, and one, who will, of course, train up your daughters in the same helpless

ness. How will this add to his anxiety and embarrassment? It may perhaps drive him to despair, and cause him to resort to the cup of intemperance to drown his cares. It may be, then, that notwithstanding your ardent love for him, your unreserved devotion to him, you will, simply on account of your helplessness, your destitution of the power and the means of self-support, be the instrument of completing his ruin, or converting his pecuniary into moral bankruptcy and of sending him to the drunkard's grave. But if, on the contrary, under the circumstances supposed, your husband sees you capable of aiding and assisting in the struggle, able and willing to labor for your own support, and to contribute to the support of the family, how will he be cheered and sustained? How much more resolutely and perseveringly will he himself struggle, how much will his moral character be improved, and his happiness, in union with your own increased. He may become poor. But your love for and devotion to each other, will be increased as you strug-

gle together and assist each other. I would ask any young lady, who may read these pages to contemplate the different pictures I have here presented, and to say if there be not sufficient inducement, in the possible contingency suggested, to lead her to seek, now while she is young for the means of self-support.

But there are other reasons, which it is important should be mentioned in this connection. The consciousness that you are capable of self-support renders you independent in fact and in feeling. Should you be reduced to poverty, in regard to outward possessions, still you will have a fund of wealth within yourselves, in your own well-trained and well-exercised powers. You will not be reduced to the unpleasant necessity of casting yourselves, as burdens, upon the bounty and charity of friends. Wherever you may be, you will be able to render an equivalent for what you receive. Instead of seeking charity, your services will be sought. You will in fact be independent. And this is an impor-

tant consideration in another point of view. It is often the case that young ladies, who are dependant upon others, are induced to accept offers of marriage, which they would not under other circumstances, regard with favor. Being without a home, they are willing, or at least are strongly tempted, to run risks in regard to the character of him, who may offer himself, in order to secure a home, which under other circumstances they would avoid. The marriage relation is one, in which, if the parties are well matched and conduct towards each other upon proper principles, there may be as much happiness as any earthly relation can be expected to afford. But it is a relation, which is formed for life, for better or for worse, and a relation too, which, if the parties are not well matched, or do not conduct themselves towards each other in a proper manner, is productive of more misery, than perhaps any other relation on earth. It is important, therefore, that there should be great caution in entering upon such a relation. When a young lady receives an

offer, there are many very solemn considerations to be carefully taken into account, before it is accepted. What is the character of the young man in regard to energy—enterprise and industry? Is he one who bids fair to be able to support all the expenses of a family? What are his habits? Is he a gambler or inclined to the vice of gambling—a vice which not only leads to pecuniary ruin, but which hardens the heart and destroys the most ardent love? Is he an idler, inclined to neglect his business, and spend his time in lounging, exposed to temptation and liable to fall a victim to intemperance and other prostrating vices? What is his disposition, on which much of the happiness of the wife must ever depend? What are his principles? Are they loose and unsettled, or are they fixed and decidedly moral and religious? These, and a great variety of other similar questions, are to be taken into consideration and carefully weighed before accepting his offer. For, should the young man be deficient in these respects, it will be much better

for the young lady to remain, even to the end of life, unmarried, than to be connected with him, in the close and lasting bonds of matrimony. But, that a young lady may be able to take these questions into careful consideration, she should be in some degree independent. If not, if destitute of the means and the power of self-support, and earnestly desiring a home and a competency, she will be strongly tempted, to say the least, to run great risks. But, if she possesses the means and the power of self-support in her own well-trained and well-developed energies, she will be in fact independent of the necessity of throwing herself away, upon any worthless character, that may offer. As then, my young friends, I would see you cautious in forming the marriage relation, that so you may derive from it the happiness, which, under the most favorable circumstances, it is calculated to afford, I would urge you now that you are young, to prepare to support yourselves by your own efforts. Then will you be independent in fact, or as much so as

we can any of us be in this world. Still further you will be independent in feeling. If poor—if single—you will still feel independent. You will not feel like cringing and creeping through the world, unable to think or to speak for yourself, ever consulting the whims, that you may please the fancy and secure the assistance of those around you. There is no circumstance which presents a greater obstacle to real christian devotion to truth and duty, than this feeling of dependence, which arises from this inability to support one's self. Will you not then, by now acquiring the power of self-support, free yourselves from this trying and dangerous feeling of dependence upon the charities and consequently upon the whims of others?

Finally this very effort, to prepare to support yourselves by your own labors, will exert a moral influence over your characters, of the purest and most healthful kind. The young, and especially young ladies, are apt to be thoughtless in regard to the contingences and realities of life. And this is more partic-

ularly the case with those young ladies, who are reared in the lap of wealth. I know not why it is, but it is true, that our most wealthy men, will often train up their sons to labor, in some way, for their own support. Do they send their sons to college, it is that they may prepare themselves, by their knowledge of some profession, for self-support. If they do not send them to college, they place them as clerks in some mercantile house, that, in this way, they may be prepared for self-support. But it is not so with daughters. They seem to be often regarded as useless incumbrances upon the estate, to be fitted for the matrimonial market. And this circumstance operates to render them more thoughtless in regard to the possible contingencies and sober realities of life, than they otherwise would be. How often do parents even in wealthy circumstances, ask "how shall we fit our son to get his own living?"—and how seldom is a question like this asked in regard to daughters? Now if parents would pursue an opposite course of treatment towards their daughters, would im-

press upon them the uncertainty of earthly riches, and the importance of preparing to maintain themselves, what an effect would their conduct have upon the characters of those daughters, in allaying their vanity and frivolity and thoughtlessness, and in awakening them to a calm contemplation of the possible contingences, and a careful preparation to meet the sober realities of life? But it is sometimes the case, that young ladies are called upon to be true to themselves, and to remedy, in their self-cultivation, the defects of parental training. Suppose then, that a young lady resolves, that, notwithstanding the wealth of her parents, she will acquire the power of self-support, what will be the effect of acting up to this resolution upon her character? Will it not keep ever before her mind the thought of the possible contingences of life? Will she not feel that the continued enjoyment of wealth is uncertain? And will not this thought check all pride or vanity, which, under other circumstances, might spring up in her heart, on account of the

wealth of her father ? Will it not cause her to see that worth of character—individual energy and power of usefulness—amiable dispositions and unbending principles, constitute the only real and lasting wealth ? Will not this resolution cause her to look forward to the future scenes of life, not merely as to an opportunity for display—not merely as to a scene of uninterrupted enjoyment, but as to a field for the discharge of duty—for doing good and being useful ? Will not such a resolution, if acted upon, infuse new energy into her soul, make her what, without it, she could not have become, fill her with self-respect, and secure for her the respect of all around ? Most surely such will be its natural influence upon the character. I have thus, my young friends, urged upon your attention the importance of preparing now while you are young, to support yourselves, to get your own living, should circumstances ever require it, by your own efforts. I have urged this, on the ground of the liability to a change of pecuniary circumstances in your father, or

your future husband, should you be married ; on the ground of the independence, which it will give you in fact and in feeling, raising you above a thousand unpleasant circumstances, and keeping you from a thousand dangerous temptations; on the ground of the elevating and ennobling moral influence, which such an effort will exert over your own characters. And I would hope that which I have written, will not be dismissed without thought—as merely an odd notion of one who knows nothing upon the subject. It is not so—I do know. I have seen moral weakness, mental imbecility and utter wretchedness, resulting from the neglect to acquire the power of self-support. I wish for your happiness—I wish to see you prepared for the possible, the probable contingencies of life. I wish to see you forming characters marked by real worth and true energy; exhibited, as these ever will be, in connection with true feminine delicacy and propriety. It is for this reason that I have written these pages. God grant that they may be instrumental of the good and

happiness of those to whom they are addressed.

And now, perhaps, you ask, how you shall best comply with the counsels which I have here given? You may ask, if I am about to advise all young ladies, even the daughters of the most wealthy, to learn some one of the arts or trades, to which females usually resort for support? In answer, I would say, that such is not my intention. Should you do this, and then be reduced to poverty, it might be the case, that you would not find employment in the particular pursuit which you had learned. And this being your only means of support, you would, under such circumstances, be nearly as dependent as without such an art. I have seen young ladies in this situation, with the knowledge of some one art, in which they could not find employment, and not being acquainted with the common routine of female labors, they were useless to others and unhappy themselves, still dependant, and in the circumstances in which they were placed, without the means of self-support. I do not recommend, as a general, as a universal thing,

the learning of any of the trades or arts, to which females usually resort. And what, then, you will ask, do I recommend? I answer, that I recommend your making yourselves thoroughly and practically acquainted with the whole round of ordinary, domestic female duties and labors. Let there be no part of domestic female labor, with which you are not acquainted. And in doing this, I mean something more than merely knowing and being able to tell how it should be done. I mean practical skill in doing it. It may be, that, although the daughter of a man of wealth, you do sometimes enter the kitchen to see how things are done there, and learn how they should be done. This is well, but it is not enough; it is not the whole of what I mean. I mean that you should take hold and do the things which belong to that department of household duties, until you acquire a practical skill in doing them—so that without the direction of your mother, and without the assistance of domestics, you would of yourself be qualified to keep your father's house. And so

too, in regard to the use of the needle, and the knitting needles, learn all their various uses, and make yourself skilful in these various uses. I would have you not only learn to do fine work, although I would urge you to make yourself thoroughly skilled in that, but I would have you equally well skilled in the coarser use of the needle. I would have you understand how to darn and patch neatly, as well as how to work in the best possible manner, a cape or a collar. These are both important parts of female labor, and ought both to be learned, as they may both become, in an emergency, the means of her support.—The only way to become skilled in any part of female labor, is to practice, and to continue to practice doing it. This is the only way in which you make yourself practically skilled in any accomplishment. You do not think it enough to be told merely by your music master, how to touch the keys of your piano,—you practice, over and over again, until you become skilled. You do not think it enough to have your dancing master show

you, in his own performance, how you should dance. This might, perhaps, make you a critic, upon the dancing of others. But to be yourself a good dancer, you must practice, over and over again. So you should not think it sufficient to be told by your mother, how the domestic and household labors should be performed, nor yet that it is sufficient to see them performed by domestics. You must perform them yourself, over and over again, if you would be skilled in their performance.

The importance of this kind of preparation, for self-support, you will perceive, upon a moment's reflection. Should your mother be taken from you, should your father be reduced and compelled to dismiss his domestics, you can, if you have health, lighten his burthens. For you can not only preside and direct, but you can actually perform. And so too, should you, in the married state, find a difficulty, as many married ladies do, in procuring good domestics, you will not feel dependent upon them. You can perform the labors of your own family. Should you have

domestics, you can not only direct, but you can shew, by example, how things should be done. And then, too, having actually performed these duties and labors yourself, you know all the difficulty of their performance, and will, on that account, look more kindly upon your domestics. Should your husband be reduced, you can, if you have health, dismiss your domestics, for you are yourself skilled in the performance of domestic duties, and household labors.

And then, too, should it happen to you as it sometimes does to young ladies, reared in the lap of wealth and indulgence, that your father's estate, at his death, is insolvent, and you are left wholly to your own resources, you will find a welcome in almost every family you may enter. Your knowledge is not confined to one branch of labor. You can turn your hand to any labor usually needed in a family. You can make yourself useful, wherever you are, and consequently you will never want a home or friends. And you will feel, too, wherever you are, that you

are not a burthen, that you render an equivalent for what you receive. Such, then, is my advice, in regard to the work of the hands. Make yourselves, my young friends, thoroughly and practically acquainted, with the whole round of female household labors, and then if you cannot find employment in one way, you can in another. Then will you always find a welcome and a home—then may you under all ordinary circumstances, feel independent.

But I have other advice, in regard to employments of the mind. In acquiring your education, usually so called, that is, in your attendance at school, and upon the various studies of school, keep this object of future self-support in view. To whatever branch of study your attention may be directed, be thorough in that study, and especially in the elementary principles of that branch. You may not perhaps pass over many branches of study. Yet if you are thorough in the elementary principles of the branches you do study, you will be prepared to teach in them.

Suppose for example you have an opportunity of attending only to reading, spelling and writing. Make yourself thoroughly acquainted with the elementary principles of these branches. Endeavor to understand the application of these principles. Endeavor to understand the best modes of communicating and impressing them. And then, if you go no farther, you will be qualified for profitable employment in teaching. You will be qualified to do much of that part of teaching, which ordinarily devolves upon females. Now I am fully satisfied, from what I have seen, that many young ladies, who have had great advantages—who have received what is fashionably termed a finished education, are not qualified to teach reading and spelling, as they should be taught. I have named the very lowest and simplest branches. Suppose you go farther and study Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Philosophy, Astronomy, French. Still I say be thorough in the elementary principles of these studies, and then should your reduced circumstances ever here-

after render it necessary, you will be qualified to teach them, and thus to support yourself in an honorable, and independent manner.

And the same advice would I give in regard to accomplishments. Should you have an opportunity to attend to Music or Painting, and find that you have a taste for them, be thorough and make yourself acquainted with the science, the principles of these arts. Then you will be qualified to give instruction in them. If in all your course of education you will comply with the advice, which I have here given, you may fit yourselves for many pleasant and useful employments, which will, if you should hereafter need, be the means of an honorable self-support. And what adds importance to this advice, is that this is the only mode of acquiring a knowledge of the several branches of education, which will render them as useful to you as they are capable of being made. The thorough study of the elements of different branches of education, is the only mode of pleasant and profitable study even without any regard to

the use which is to be made of them in after life by way of teaching.

Let me then, my young friends, urge this subject upon your attention, as one of the utmost importance to your present best improvement, and to your future highest happiness. Examine the different points of my advice again and again, and ask if they be not in accordance with fact, with truth and with reason. And if they appear to your minds to be so, then let no difficulty in the way deter you from making the effort to acquire, now while you are young, the power of future self-support.

ADDITIONAL LETTER.

No. II.

The practice of joking upon the subject of courtship and marriage very common among ladies—It degrades the character of those who indulge in it—It destroys or mars the pleasure and profit of social intercourse—It exerts a deleterious influence upon the young—It destroys the solemnity and importance which ought always to be attached to the subject of marriage—This joking prevails sometimes among gentlemen ; but it has its rise with ladies—if they will break up the practice among themselves it will not prevail in the community.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS :

In my last letter, I directed your attention to the importance of securing, now while you are young, the power and the means of future self-support. I wish, in this, to say a few words in regard to a practice, in which young ladies, and indeed ladies of all ages, are prone to indulge. I refer to the practice of *ever joking upon the subject of courtship and mar-*

riage. It is a fact, that among ladies, and even among young ladies, there is a propensity to be continually joking upon this subject. A young gentleman and a young lady can scarcely treat each other with common courtesy and politeness, but the lady is at once, tormented by the stale jokes, the hackneyed witticisms, the oft repeated and sometimes even indelicate allusions of her female acquaintances. Is a lady free in her social intercourse with a gentleman? The report is quickly started, and widely spread, that she is seeking attentions, has fallen in love, or is actually engaged. This I say is the fact, and in saying this, I speak only of what I have seen and known. The practice may prevail to a greater degree in some places than in others. But it prevails to some extent, I am satisfied in all places. I have known parents continually joking upon this subject, and that too in a very improper manner, before their children. Nay more, I have known them continually joking their daughters even, from early youth, seeming to convey, in their jokes, the idea that

the great object of every young lady should be to get married, and that a female can be subjected to no greater disgrace, than that consequent upon living single. And I have felt and have said to myself, as I have witnessed this, should these parents be cursed by the imprudent and unhappy marriages of their daughters, they must regard themselves as the procuring cause of their sufferings. When this practice becomes an inveterate habit, as it often does, it destroys all delicate regard for the feelings of others, and even the sacred precincts of hallowed grief are not free from its intrusions. How often is it the case, when the husband or the wife are taken away by death, that the whole neighborhood and village gossip is employed in discussing a suitable match for the surviving partner? How often is it the case, that the broken heart of some mourning widow is pierced by these unfeeling and indelicate jokes of female acquaintances?

Such my friends are facts. Shall I tell you how all this appears to the eye of an observ-

er? It seems as if the one engrossing and all-absorbing object of thought and desire with such minds, related to the subject of marriage. They may be well informed and may engage in conversation upon some intellectual topic. But how readily is the conversation broken off, when the subject of courtship and marriage, of love affairs, and matrimonial engagements is introduced, and how much more freely do tongues now move—how much brighter do eyes now sparkle—and how much greater earnestness in listening is there now, than there was before. You conclude that conversation upon other subjects is forced, while this is only the flowing forth, in words, of the spontaneous emotions of the heart.

Does one given to this practice of joking, see a lady and a gentleman conversing freely and socially? You would suppose, from her jokes and remarks, that it had never entered her conceptions that they could possibly converse upon other subjects than love, courtship or marriage. And even if assured that the conversation was upon an altogether dif-

ferent subject, still you would suppose, from her hints and insinuations, that she could not believe it possible, that, though conversing upon other subjects, their thoughts could be upon any other than these. Such is the appearance of this practice in the eye of an observer. I can assure you that with the intelligent and noble, and pure, it has a tendency to degrade the character of those who indulge in it—to destroy that deep and heartfelt respect, which it is important should ever be cherished for female character.

But this is a practice, which not only degrades you in the eyes of intelligent observers, it is productive of evil consequences. It either utterly destroys or greatly mars the pleasure of social intercourse. We are created for the society of each other. We are so constituted that we love each others society, our happiness is increased if we can share it with another—our griefs are diminished if we can enjoy the sympathy of others in the midst of them. And we are not so created, that our social intercourse is not to be confined to persons of the

same sex with ourselves. Gentlemen and ladies enjoy each others society, even in those cases where there is, and can be, no thought of love, technically so called, courtship or marriage—and they are improved by each other's society. They are probably more improved than they could be, were they to confine all their social intercourse to members of their own sexes respectively. The softness and delicacy and refinement of woman's conversation exerts a salutary influence upon the character of man. Without it, men would be in danger of becoming bears in their manners and in their intercourse with each other. And on the other hand, the conversation of man exerts a favorable influence upon the character of woman, preventing that sickly effeminacy which would otherwise prevail. Gentlemen and ladies then are made for society, for social intercourse with each other. But what is social intercourse? the mere pronouncing of words by two persons in the form of a dialogue? Most surely not. Have you never witnessed a fashionable morning call of

one lady upon another, made because the acquaintance must be kept up, and not because the ladies feel at all interested in each other? There were words uttered by both, and that with fluency too. But has there been social intercourse? Most surely not. To constitute social intercourse there must be a free interchange of thought and feeling. At least this interchange of thought and feeling must be free from all restraints, but such as good sense and true delicacy would impose. When two persons meet together, if they would enjoy the highest and purest pleasures of social intercourse, they should be able to express to each other their thoughts and their feelings, their doubts and their enquiries upon the various topics, which may be the subjects of their conversation, without the feeling that their freedom will subject them to remark, or cause them to be tormented with constant and annoying jokes. Still further, they should not feel that the one or the other of them may draw inferences from this freedom in conversation of an improper character. There may

be—there sometimes is intercourse of this character. It is truly pleasant, truly profitably. But the practice of which I am speaking destroys, in a great degree, all this pleasure, and prevents all this profit. When young ladies and gentlemen feel that in their social intercourse they are watched, when they feel that any freedom in conversation with each other, will subject them to reproaches and remarks, they will be under an unpleasant restraint, their conversation will degenerate into stiff and cold and distant formality. Or, if this be not the result, the gentleman, having heard so much of this joking, and not knowing but the lady he converses with may feel, as those, who indulge in this practice of joking, seem to feel, that all freedom in conversation on the part of a gentleman with a lady, must mean something in particular, will fear that she may draw improper inferences from his unrestrained manner. In these ways, you perceive, the practice of which I am speaking, either entirely destroys or greatly mars, all the pleasure and profit of social intercourse.

Again; this practice exerts an injurious influence upon the young. We sometimes wonder that boys and girls begin, at so early an age, to manifest their feelings upon this subject, to be thinking and speaking of *beaux* and *sweet hearts*. But why should they not? They hear this from those older than themselves, even from their earliest childhood. They hear it from the young gentlemen and ladies they may be acquainted with, from their older brothers and sisters, and it may be even from their parents. They see, for example, that if an older sister seems to enjoy the society of any young gentleman, as a friend, she is at once joked upon the subject, and he is called her beau. Why, then, when in childish simplicity, they enjoy each other's society, boys and girls together, should not the example which has been set before them, be followed—why should not they think and speak of their beaux and sweathearts. Nay, more; it does not appear to me, a whit more ridiculous in this latter case, than in the case of older persons. But its absurdity in either

ease is not its worst feature; it exerts, I am satisfied, and especially over the young, a deleterious moral influence.

Still further, it gives rise to improper feelings in regard to the relation of marriage. It destroys, in the mind, the solemnity and seriousness with which this subject should ever be viewed, and causes it to be entered upon in the most thoughtless and inconsiderate manner. The marriage relation is one of the most important in society. It is fraught with consequences, which come nearer to the heart and more deeply affect the character and happiness, than the consequences of any other relation. Just look at it. Two individuals, of different tastes, in many things, of different habits, and of different feelings, are brought together as husband and wife, sustaining to each other a relation more intimate than any other which exists on earth, a relation in which the whole happiness of the one party may be destroyed, by some slight indiscretion or by some infelicity of temper and disposition in the other; a relation in which one's success

and usefulness; may be either much promoted or much retarded by the influence of the other; a relation in which one's religious improvement and preparation for heavenly happiness, may depend, in some degree, upon the partner; and a relation, too, it is, which is formed for life. Its misery, if misery be the result, is not the misery of a day, or a week, but the misery of a life. Its influence for good or for evil, will be felt, not merely for a few months, or for a few years, but for life; nay, more; its influence will produce results upon the character that shall outlast time, and be experienced in eternity. Now is such a relation, *the relation* of all others, to be made the subject of light and trifling, and it may be, of vulgar joking? Is such a relation to be ever held up before the young, as one of the plays of life; of no more importance than the choosing of partners for a cotillion? Oh, no. When you reflect, young ladies, you cannot, one would think, longer indulge in this practice of joking upon the subject. The grand reason why the practice is so com-

mon, is, that you do not reflect, do not consider how unbecoming the practice is, and how great the evil consequences that result from it.

But why, you may ask, do I speak to ladies, so particularly, upon this subject?—is it not a practice, in which gentlemen sometimes indulge? It is true, I answer, that this practice does prevail, sometimes and to some extent, among gentlemen. But it does not prevail to the same extent, in the one case as in the other. And it usually originates with ladies. At least, if some weak minded gentleman should in any case introduced such subjects, the conversation upon them will not be kept up without the assistance of the ladies. I would then entreat you, that, as you value your own characters, as you regard the happiness of those with whom you may associate—and as you would elevate and improve the social intercourse of the community—you would carefully avoid this unbecoming practice.

END.





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